



The Excellent Woman

Printed for Joseph Watts



The Excellent Woman

Printed for Joseph Watts

THE
EXCELLENT WOMAN
Described
BY HER
TRUE CHARACTERS
AND
THEIR OPPOSITES.

Dorington, Theophilus

Licensed and Entered—

LONDON,

Printed for Joseph Watts, at the An-
gel in St. Paul's Church-Yard,
MDCXCII.

The University of Chicago
Libraries

BJ1550

D68

v. 12

Rare bk
room



Eng.

1202403

~~M.C.~~

TO THE
EXCELLENT
AND
MUCH HONOURED
LADY,

The Lady Mary Walcot.

MADAM,

THERE is not any Thing that
can Recommend Vertue to the
World, with so much Force
and Advantage, as the Exam-
ples of those that eminently Practise it.

A 3

Vertue

The Dedication.

Virtue is like Beauty in this, That it has Peculiar and Nameless Charms, in the Living Original, which no Art can possibly represent in the Draughts or Descriptions of it.

But 'tis the great Unhappiness of the World, that these Excellent Examples are seldom very Numerous: And none but those who live within the Sphere of their Converse, can have the Benefit of their Influence: And, which is yet a greater Disadvantage, perhaps several of these, like your Ladiship, do Love and Chuse Retirement. In which case they can be seen but by Few.

All that we can do then for the Rest of the World, towards the making them in Love with Virtue, and the perswading them to Court and seek it, lies in these following Things. We must present them with as exact a Draught and Picture of this Beauty as we can, in the clear and distinct Explications of Virtue. We must add to this, the most fitting and advantageous Dress, in giving it the becoming Illustrations and deserved

The Dedication.

deserved Praises. And it may further conduce to our Purpose, to draw also, and set near the Former, the deform'd Characters of the opposite Vices; which, like a Black-a-more by a Fair Lady, will set off the Beauty to more Advantage.

Thus much, I presume, is tolerably perform'd in the following Book, which is greatly Ambitious to obtain the Honour of Your Ladiship's Approbation.

Besides these, there is but one Thing remaining, that can be serviceable to our Purpose: But 'tis that which seems as Necessary and Conducing as all the Rest that we can do. And that is to assure the World, That the Excellent Draught, or Picture we have made, is the Description and Character of some Real Person, who rather Excels, than falls short of the Representation. Without this, the Skill of the Representer may be admired, but the Thing represented cannot; when it is not known, that there is any such Thing really in Being; and

The Dedication.

so the Design of the Labour would be lost, and the End frustrated.

When we propose a Person, in whom those Excellent Characters of Vertue may all be found, and that with advantage ; then we make it known, that the Precepts and Rules prescrib'd, are not Notions but Practice ; they are not only what ought to be done, but what is done ; they are not invented, but are raised from Observation. When we can mention an Excellent Example, we confute that Prejudice which deters the Cowardly and Mean Spirits, from the Pursuit of Vertue ; who represent it to themselves, as too strict in the Rules of it, as a Thing in Imagination only, and as too difficult, or even impossible to be put in Practice : And we do that which will inspire the more Generous Souls, with a Spirit of Emulation ; and kindle, in all such, a brave Ambition to imitate and equal, if they can, what is so Excellent and Commendable.

It

The Dedication.

It is for this, Madam, that I have made so bold, as to set Your Ladiship's Name to the Front of this Book. 'Tis well known of Your Ladiship, by all that have the Honour and the Happiness of Your Acquaintance, that the best Characters here are no more the Description of an Excellent Woman, than they are Characters of You. And they will all bear with me this Testimony to Your Worth, that whereinsoever this Description comes short of the Subject, it might be perfectly compleated by one that were able to compleat Your Excellent Character. To the Instances of particular Vertues in the Body of the Book, I had a Desire to add an Universal One.

This Apology, Madam, I ought to make for my Interrupting Your better Employment; for venturing to Publish those Vertues to the World, which Your Ladiship does seek to Conceal; and for ascribing those Praises, which You are as unwilling as deserving to receive. I hope You will be pleased
to

The Dedication.

to Pardon that, which a Zeal for the
Honour and Advantage of Your Sex
has inspired; and suffer me to Sub-
scribe,

MADAM,

Your Ladyship's

Most Humble

and Devoted Servant,

T. D.

THE

THE P R E F A C E.

To the Female Sex,

I Present you here with a Piece of *Morality*, wherein you have the Characters of *Vertues* and *Vices*; drawn, indeed, with design to Recommend the One Sort, and to Expose the Other: Yet I think it is done with Sincerity too, and that there needs no more but to represent these Things truly for both those Purposes. The Book, I am sure, would most effectually recommend its self to you, if you would take the Pains to Read and Consider it well; and compare what it says, with the Common Practice of the World. This is the best Way to know fully how Useful and Important to you those Intimations are, which are here presented. But since this cannot be known without such an use of it, and especially those who have most need of these Instructions, will be apt to neglect them, I think fit to say some few Things to Recommend the Reading of it.

It is design'd and directed to serve the Honour and Happiness of the Female Sex, who are perhaps the larger Half of Mankind; and who doubtless are, or may be, as Important, at least, as the Other

ther. I cannot chuse but think, that the Glory and Worth, and Happiness of any Nation depends as much upon them, as upon the Men. And, perhaps, others will be of my Mind, if it be consider'd; That we are born of them; that we commonly derive from them what we are in our Nature, more than from the other Parent: So far as this does depend upon the frame of the Body, which is not a little, it is form'd in the Womb. We are beholden to our Mothers Vertue and good Disposition, and wise ordering of her self for our natural Inclinations to any Vertue, for the Calmness of our Temper, for the Brightness of our Wit, for the Regularity of our Constitutions, and for the Strength of our Bodies. And on the contrary, from their Exorbitant Passions we are disposed to great Passions; and from their ungovern'd Appetites, their Intemperance and other Vices, we often derive the Strength of Vicious Inclinations, a crazy Constitution, and a weak Body? But further will their Influence upon the World appear, if we consider that Invincible, and Universal Law of Nature, which inclines the other Sex to love and seek their Conversation and Company.

From hence it must needs follow, That their Influence upon the Men, may be commonly as great as they will. Their Example will effectually lead us; we cannot chuse but put on some Conformity to those whom we love: Their Perswasions and Instigations will powerfully provoke and excite us; their Approbation and Applause is a great Encouragement, and their Condemnation or Dislike, necessarily weakens
and

and dispirits our Endeavours. Do not these things appear in the Experience of all Ages? Could Adam himself long keep his Innocence, when Eve had eaten the forbidden Fruit, and added to that the Persuasion of him to do the same? Was not the Mighty Saul mov'd to a mortal Envy against David, because the Women in their Songs and Applauses, had preferr'd the lucky Youth before the practis'd Warriour? Did not the Idolatrous Wives so far prevail with Solomon, as to draw that wise Prince into the absurd Sin of Idolatry? Do not Histories show us that they have been able to perswade, even, the greatest Men to what they would? That they have by their Instigation overturn'd Kingdoms, confounded Commonwealths, laid Cities desolate, and brought to pass the greatest Revolutions and Confusions? And that on the other side, they have sometimes been the Springs and first Movers of the Bravest Actions? Have they not saved many Cities, and Contributed greatly many times to the Strength and Prosperity of Commonwealths? Some of these Things may be seen in the following Book. We may see it common in the World, that the other Sex are often but the Tools and Slaves to their Vices; or the Instruments and Servants of their Vertues: And indeed, that they take Delight in being so; that 'tis usually their greatest Joy and Pleasure, and the most sensible part in the Reward of their Hazards and Labours, to have pleased this Sex in what they have done; to have promoted the Honour and Interest, or to have gain'd the Praise and Favour of the Woman that is loved.

These

These Things are not said to Impute to them all the Vice and Folly of the World; but to show, from the Influence which they can have in it, How necessary and Important it is, that they be brought up in Learning and Vertue, and have their Minds well furnish'd and govern'd by these Accomplishments. They have contributed no more towards Vice, than towards Vertue. What harm that Sex did to the World in Eve, they have made us a sufficient amends for in the Blessed Virgin. What harm soever they do to the present Age, and whatever their share may be in the Vices and Follies of it, this we may justly blame the Men for; who take upon them to govern all Things, and condemn the Women to such an Education, as can render them but very little useful, and leaves them apt to be only mischievous and hurtful to the World. Certainly there cannot possibly be a greater oversight, than to banish them to those little, trivial and uselesse Employments, which usually take up their precious Time of Leisure, and a single Life. To confine them to the Molding up of Wax, when they should be forming of their Minds, by the Laws of Vertue and Wisdom: To learn the adjusting of their Cloaths, rather than of their Words and Actions. If these Employments keep them out of the way of such Temptations as would corrupt them; yet what good do they put into them? If they keep them from Vice, what Vertue do they form in their Minds? The Truth is, they cannot hinder the growth of Vice and Folly, from the Seeds of them that are in our corrupted Nature. These will im-
prove

The Preface.

v

prove and get Strength in them, by the Exercise of their own Thoughts. Ill desires will be stirring, if they are kept from evil Actions: And they may be corrupted by their own untaught and ungovern'd Discourses with each other.

There is no Opposition to Vice and Folly made by this Sort of Education; and then it must needs grow if it be not check'd and kill'd: yea it rather serves to cherish and promote it. They are bred in a great concern and care about their Bodies, and in a neglect of their Minds; they are taught to strive to recommend themselves to the World without any real worth, and meerly by the Ornament and disposal of the Outside. What measure of Chastity are they taught, by making the Image of a Fair Woman, with but one Garment on, and Carressing a Black-a-moor? Their Musick joyn'd with such Songs, as have for their common Subjects either fond Love, or obscene Intimations, or blasphemous Flatteries of their Sex; what does it but cherish Vanity and Pride, and feed and excite foolish and shameful Desires? And what Vertue are they taught, what useful Knowledge are they possess'd with, by this Education? What Vertue do they learn by the Management of the Needle? How little may they understand of Fortitude, or possess of it, for all the Forming of a Broad-shoulder'd Image in Wax, and the setting it by a Pillar? Or what degrees of Charity does it put into them, and what Rules of Exercising it are taught them, by their learning to make up the Image of a Woman, with Three naked Children about her?

What

What do they learn of the Nature and Use of Fruits and Plants, while they learn to imitate them in their Shape and Colour? Might not the Wise that can excel in these Curious and Useless Trifles, be taught more important Things? Why might they not learn Physick and Chirurgery, as well as Cookery; to save as well as to destroy Men pleasantly? That which is a Vice rather than an Accomplishment, as commonly practised; why are they not as soon taught the wholesomeness or unwholesomeness of Meats and Drinks, as what is Pleasant and Grateful to the Palate? Why have they not Lectures of Morality read to them in their Schools; and the Mistresses showing them the Importance and Usefulness of the Precepts of Vertue? Why may not they learn Languages as well as we? Whenever they set well about it, they commonly do it better than we can. And if they were taught the Art of Reasoning, and the Art of Speaking; if their Minds were well furnished with Philosophy and Divinity; if they were plentifully endowed with useful Knowledge and refined Vertue, we should not think one Language, nor hardly one Tongue enough for them. Their chief Time for Improving is spent without Improvement, and all they learn in it is not any thing that they can ever be the wiser, or the better, or the happier for. Their Education is not directed, nor design'd to teach them how Odious a Thing Vice is; how shameful and contemptible Ignorance, and how Glorious and Lovely a Thing it is to be Vertuous. We have reformed our Nunneries, the Schools of our Women, from Popery and
Super-

Superstition, but not from Pride and Vanity; nor have made them, as we should do, the Schools of Vertue, and Religion, and useful Knowledge.

See here the Ground and Reason of all the Defects and Disparagements of that Sex. Hence are we so often vexed or tainted with their Vices and Follies: This is the fundamental Occasion of all the just Complaints that are made against them. And most unjust are they used, while they are bred to be of no use, and then are despised for being so: and while there is no care taken to possess them with Vertue, and Religion, and Learning, and then they are rail'd at for Ignorance, Folly and Vice. To this Cause must all their Emptiness and Impertinence be imputed; hence 'tis they are no more useful to the World. To this also, we must impute all their Vices, the ill Influence they have among Men, and all the Mischief they do.

Thus we may see how Important it is to the World, and how much for the Interest of the Other Sex, that the Women be bred to useful Knowledge and Vertue. And thus I have follow'd the Common Custom, in giving the Preference to the Men, and speaking first of their Interest in this Matter.

I shall now apply my self directly to the Women themselves, and endeavour to make it appear to them, how Important and Useful it is to themselves, to be Learned and Vertuous. Something

is said of Learning in the following Book, and therefore I shall say the less here; and the Particular Vertues are recommended, and therefore I shall only insist upon some General Commendations of it.

Let me intreat you then, to consider the Pleasure and the Advantage of Knowledge. This is, like Light, Chearing and Delightful to the Mind; and Ignorance, like Darknes, is Uncomfortable and Sad. Knowledge enlarges the Soul, Ignorance contracts it. The former is the Brightness and Beauty of the Soul, and adds Lustre to it, as Polishing does to a Jewel, the latter sullies, and dims, and makes it ugly. Knowledge elevates the Mind, Ignorance depresses it: Knowledge tends to refine it from the Dregs of Sensuality, Ignorance leaves it polluted. Knowledge improves its Powers, encreases its Liberty and Freedom, and releases its Activity from the Shackles that Ignorance lays upon it. Ignorance is weak and poor, Knowledge is rich and Strong. Enough cannot be said in Praise of this inestimable Thing.

But especially, are Moral and Divine Knowledge most to be valued; these do especially improve and adorn, and will make you acceptable to God and the World, and easie and happy in your selves. The Rules of Pious and Vertuous Living, are the certain Rules of Happiness. The making of us Vertuous and Good, is the greatest Blessing, and the highest Benefit that can possibly
be

be conferr'd upon us. Those are most deplorably Ignorant of the Natures, both of *Vertue* and *Vice*, that imagine there can be a greater Good than the One, or a greater Evil than the Other; that we can be *Happy and Vicious*, or *miserable and excellently Vertuous*. *Vertue* and *Wisdom* tame the *Appetites*, and guide them *Safely and Honourably*. They *Compose and Calm* the *Passions*, and *quiet the Mind*. *Vertue* sets the *Soul* in *Order*, which is *Beautiful and Pleasant*; it teaches every *Faculty and Power* in us its right *Place and Office*, makes it know its *Bounds* and do its *Duty*: *Vice* *Disorders and Confounds* all. *Vertue* is the *Health*, *Vice* the *Sickness* of the *Soul*; and as the *Health* of the *Body* improves and maintains its *Beauty and Strength*, so does *Vertue* for the *Soul*; and *Vice*, on the contrary, *Weakens, Deforms, and gives it Pain and Trouble*. *Vertue* is *Serene and Calm*, *Vice* is *Stormy and Tempestuous*. The *Vertuous Woman* may live without *Fear or Distrust*, in *Tranquility and Repose*. She has no cause to blush in *Company*, nor to tremble when she is alone. She can enjoy the *Present Time* with *Quietness and Peace*; has neither *Shame nor Remorse* for what is past; and none but fair and joyful *Hopes* for what is to come. The most lasting and most tasteful *Pleasure* attends it: *Pleasure*, that no *Man* can take from her; such *Delight* as does not *Torment* with *Impatience*, nor make her *Sick* with *Disgust*; that does not depend as those of the *World* do on in-

innumerable Circumstances, whereof if any one be wanting, they are Odious or Insipid. Vertue and Wisdom are the only Things that can fit you for all Conditions, to adorn them and be happy in them. They direct to the most Honourable and comfortable Use both of a Good and Bad Fortune, both of a Married and a Single State.

These (believe me) are the most powerful, and the most lasting Charms. These will gain you true Admirers and sincere Servants, while outward Beauty and Ornament, procure only feigned Ones: And will hold the Hearts they win faster than the fading Advantages of an outside. Inclination may make a Man Court and Seek you, it may be enough to be a Woman for this, especially if to that there be added Beauty and the Invincible Charms of a good Fortune; but these cannot beget a true and lasting love. Without Wisdom, and Vertue, and Knowledge. The Servant is no sooner better acquainted, but it may be Folly and Vice distaste him, and his Addresses are at an End. If Interest engage him still, then he proceeds to make up the proposed Bargain; and there is a Marriage without Love, which is an Hell upon Earth. Beauty without these Things, though it be Charming at the first Sight, yet it can secure none but the lightest and most foolish Part of Mankind; and in them it kindles no more than a brutish Desire, which turns into Distaste very commonly, as soon as it is gratified. Their mighty Admiration falls into Contempt;

The Preface.

xi

Contempt; and one may see the fine and pretty thing sitting alone, for all him, while the Passionate Lover is hugging a Bottle perhaps and kissing the Glass instead of her, and any thing is able to draw or detain him from her Company. Knowledge and Vertue would make you worthy of that Love which Nature inclines us to present you, and would make your Society always pleasant and always desirable, and that to the best and wisest of Men.

It is no small advantage to you, that a Wisdom and Vertue are the most charming things and will give you the greatest power you can have over the other Sex; so they will direct you to judge rightly of Men, and to place your Favours and Affections there where they are best deserv'd, where they will be best requited, where it will be most for your Honour and Happiness to place them. As these will enable you to know and discern which are the best and wisest of them, so they will dispose you to value such Men most, and to prefer them. When guided by these you will not be caught with fine Cloaths or a spruce Man; you will not fall in love with a Man for his boasting of and commending himself, nor for his addressing blasphemous Complements to you, you will not judge of his worth by the former trick, nor of his love by the latter. You will not think to be happy and be at the mercy of a fool, or expect that he will use you well who has not one Vertue to direct or dispose him to do so. Nor will you think that an abundance of

Wealth

Wealth is sufficient alone to make you happy. And let me add, That your Constant preference of the best and wisest Men would be one of the most powerful means to reform the Age. It would soon make Virtue and Wisdom more generally sought after among Men, when it should appear that these were absolutely necessary to the recommending them to your Favour and Esteem; and this also would return to your advantage, since by this Influence upon the World it would come to pass, that you could not want a proportionable number of fit and worthy Objects of your Affections and Choice. To your great advantage it would be, to stir up in the Men an Ambition to be well accomplish'd too; to make them ashamed of Ignorance and Vice by your Example; and you your selves would be the more happy in Brothers, Husbands, and Children.

And the Women of our Age have perhaps greater advantage than ever their Ancestours had for the Improvement of their Minds; at least so far as the Reading of Good Books can contribute towards this. When you have a great many of the best Books in the World either wrote in your own Language or Translated into it. Translation is a mighty Favour to you. It brings the Wisdom of the Ancients to you unveil'd, and enables you to study and learn it without the previous discouraging fatigue of Learning Languages. We have lately seen some of the choicest Histories and best Pieces of useful Philosophy that Greece or Rome

Rome could boast of, Translated into English. And still this Work of Translating goes on, and will especially do so if it has the Encouragement and Favour of your Sex: And I would hope to see our own Language as Learned as any other in the World. And why may we not see the costly useless Trifles that fill the Closets of our Ladies thrown out, and Excellent and Useful Books set up there in their stead. You have almost nothing else to do but to study all the time that you live single, and are at liberty from Affairs of the World. To be sure there is nothing you can do so much to your advantage as to entertain and employ your selves much with Good Books. I need not Recommend to you Plutarch or Hierocles, or Livy or Seneca, or the Excellent Antoninus, lately Translated, with the Learned and Useful Reflections of Madam Dacier, a Philosopher of your own Sex, at this time Famous for her Wit and Learning. Nor shall I mention any more, since they may be met with at every Booksellers: And it is chiefly my present Business to Recommend the following Book.

Here, then, you have the Characters of the Vertues and Vices very faithfully and truly drawn. Whereby you may learn to distinguish the one from the other; and may avoid that common and mischievous Error of mistaking Vertue for Vice, and Vice for Vertue. Vice is an Ugly Name, and that which almost all abhor should be imputed to them; and Vertue is generally in the Notion com-

mended and esteemed, and therefore almost all pretend to *Vertue* in general. But when we come to the reproof of particular *Vices*, and to charge them upon those that are Guilty; and so when we come to insist upon particular *Vertues* and to urge the Practice of them: Then the World boggles and hesitates; or it may be is angry and opposes. Then the beloved *Vice* will not be believed to be a *Vice*, and it shall be accounted ill nature or moroseness or a particular spite that calls it so: And the *Vertue* that we want, and do not care to put in practice, will not be allow'd to be a *Vertue*, but shall be disputed against. The one will be defended under a soft and specious name, and the other rejected under a bad one. Thus do many Persons often deceive themselves to their disparagement and shame and misery. While they cannot discern aright in this matter, they perhaps shun the most Honourable *Vertues*, and embrace the most shameful *Vices*. They will refuse what is good, and betake themselves to what is hurtful. They will be ashamed of *Vertue*, and boast of their *Vices*. Further, as Persons are apt for themselves to find out this way to evade the Arguments for *Vertue*, and the Reproofs of *Vice*; so they will endeavour to influence others after the same manner. They that are Vicious naturally desire to have others like themselves, that their better practice may not condemn or disparage them, that others may fall into the same inconveniencies which they have brought themselves to by their wickedness, and so may not be able to de-

vide

ride or despise them, or that they may accomplish upon those who are yet afraid of Vice, some base and shameful design. To these Purposes they endeavour much the confounding of all things, and especially of the natural and common signs of Passions and Vices in the Soul: These they would fain have not regarded, nor believed to be the Marks and Symptoms of any such things. Highly necessary it is then to be possess'd with a clear and distinct knowledge of these things.

And here you have Vertue represented in her true Beauty and Lustre, and the ugly Mask the frightful Vizor which spiteful Sinners put upon her is taken off. You may see her in all her Charms, as far as they can be represented in a Description or Picture of her: which I confess cannot have the advantages of the Life, in a sublime Example, but yet may be sufficient to beget in us some Love and Admiration of the Beauty. And here you have also Vice represented in its true Colours, and all her Deformity shown, as far as was consistent with Modesty and Discretion: and the Paint and Disguise which the Vicious Wit of the World puts upon her is also removed. Here are Motives to Vertue, and just Dissuasives from Vice, proposed. The Means of practising and improving in the one, and of abstaining from, and mortifying the other. You have the Subjects treated on, such as are of common Use and Concern, such as relate to every one: The Vertues such as all may reach, and the Vices such as all are exposed to. You have all
the

the Discourse plain and easie: Free from the crabbed terms of the Schools. You have a Philosopher not dictating after the rudeness of an Academy, but complementing and insinuating his wholesome Counsels in the stile and manner of a Courtier. And if that will recommend the Book, further I must tell you, That the most of it was written by a very Eminent Person in a Neighbour Nation, who had the Honour to be a Counsellour and Preacher in Ordinary to the King that then Reigned there.

Here you have an Excellent Anatomy as it were of the Soul, a view of the Insides of Mankind, so that you may see the secret Motions, Workings, and Effects of all sorts of Passions and Humours. Here you may learn the World then without mingling with it, which is the safest way and the pleasantest of doing this: For thus you will not be in danger of being corrupted or vexed with the wickedness and folly of it while you are learning it, which things in Converse you will be constantly exposed to. This Book, like a Mariners Chart, shows the Rocks and Shelves of Vice whereon unwary and untaught Souls are wont to make Shipwrack of Honour, perhaps of Health, of Fortune and Estate. And it shows the Safe and the Honourable Roads of Vertue. And is it not a very Important and necessary thing to be taught these Matters before we launch into the World? Without this we shall be in danger of learning the Shelves in this dangerous Sea, by running aground there, and the Rocks, by splitting

splitting upon them. Without a previous Admonition and Instruction about what we are to avoid and what to chuse, we shall learn the World only to imitate it, we shall learn and comply, and endeavour to be as like it as we can; we shall be led away with the Error of the Wicked, and follow a Multitude to do Evil. We are naturally prone to imitate what we see done by others, and more prone to imitate Evil than Good; and we shall commonly meet with more Ill Examples than Good ones. By consequence we shall be in greater likelihood of learning and following Vice than Vertue, if we are not fenced against it by Good Instruction before we venture into the World.

Let me add, 'Tis of very great Importance to you to be as early as is possible acquainted with these things; to learn betimes the Knowledge and Practice of Vertue. For as much as Habits of Good or Ill are continually growing in us; but especially in our young and tender Years. Our Actions in those Years are as it were the Seeds or Foundations of future Habits: which we contract when we are young, and are not able to leave when we are old. But if we cannot rightly discern Good from Evil, we shall become accustomed to do Evil before we know what it is. And if once we are arrived at this, it will be a matter of as much difficulty to cure our selves, as it were for the Ethiopian to change his Skin, or the Leopard his Spots. This encreases the difficulty of convincing us of our Faults. We shall be loth to own that we have been in an Error: This will engage us to justify our Faults rather

ther than acknowledge them, that we may let our selves go on without shame or remorse. And besides, if we are convinced of a Fault, after that difficulty is over, there is more remaining, and 'tis yet a very large task to conquer and forsake it, when 'tis become as it were a second nature. It is easie to correct and form young and tender Inclinations to Evil. But when several Years are gone over them, and they are become confirm'd Habits, they are then not easily subdued. We must then know *Vertue* and *Vice* betimes, and know them in their least beginnings and lowest degrees that we may practice the one, and abstain from the other.

And 'tis necessary that we begin betimes to practice *Vertue* and to resist and avoid *Vice*, that we may be inured and accustomed to do so. Then will it be easie to be *Vertuous* all our Days, and we must put a Violence and Constraint upon our selves if we would comply with the Solicitations of any *Vice*. Whereas without this we shall fall into that unhappy State that it will be easie to us only to be *Vicious*, and we must put a Constraint upon our selves when we are to do that which would become us, and would be for our Interest or our Honour. Besides 'tis our Wisdom and Happiness to have as little occasion for repentance as is possible, and therefore to begin a Course of *Vertue* betimes. And 'tis our Honour to have attain'd a great and eminent degree of *Vertue*; but the sooner we begin to endeavour this, the more likely we are to attain it. *Vertue* in youth settles a good Constitution and confirms Health in the strong Bodies,
and

and supports a tender and weak Constitution which Vice would quickly destroy. *Virtue* in youth makes the best Provision of *Worldly Enjoyments* and *Comfortable Thoughts* for *Old Age*. It defers the *Infirmities of Old Age*, and makes that commonly the freer from the things that are usually grievous to it. To *Young Persons* then, I would particularly recommend the Use of this Book for the promoting of *Virtue* among them.

To conclude: The *Women* have here an excellent *Mirror* wherein they may see themselves and all the *World*, they may discover whatever *Spots* or *Deformities* are upon themselves or others. This is a *Glass* that will certainly show you what does best become and most adorn you. Drest by this, you must needs like your selves, and may do so with good reason, and without flattering your selves: and you would also approve your selves to *God* and the *Holy Angels*, and to the best and wisest among *Mankind*.

I must only desire you to take notice of this further, That I do not apply the great Character I have given of this Book to what you now see of it, but to the whole; that which is here is at most but half worthy of it, for it is but half the intended design. The other half is actually under Hand, and I hope will be speedily presented to you; And then I doubt not but it will appear worthy of your Esteem, and of my Recommendation; and Highly Useful to promote your Honour and Happiness, the end for which it is designed.

Table

A
T A B L E

OF THE

Subjects Treated on in this BOOK.

Chap.	Page
1. <i>O F Reading ; with some Remarks upon that of this Book.</i>	1
2. <i>Of Conversation.</i>	31
3. <i>Of the Chearful Humour and the Melancholy.</i>	51
4. <i>Of Reputation.</i>	70
5. <i>Of the Inclination to Vertue, and of Devotion.</i>	82
6. <i>Of Chastity and of Complaisance.</i>	91
7. <i>Of Courage.</i>	102
8. <i>Of Constancy.</i>	112
9. <i>Of Prudence and Discretion.</i>	123
10. <i>Of the Learned Women.</i>	131
11. <i>Of Habits or Ornaments.</i>	141
12. <i>Of Beauty.</i>	148
13. <i>Of</i>	

The TABLE.

Chap.	Page
13. <i>Of Curiosity and Slander.</i>	156
14. <i>Of the Cruel and the Compassionate.</i>	163
15. <i>Of a Good Grace.</i>	170
16. <i>The Debauched or Lewd Woman.</i>	176
17. <i>Of Jealousie.</i>	183
18. <i>Of Friendship and the Love of Inclination, and that of Election.</i>	196
19. <i>Of the Complaisant or Pleasing Humour.</i>	216
20. <i>Of Birth or Nature, and Education.</i>	252
21. <i>Of an Equal Mind under Good and Bad Fortune.</i>	279

ERRATA.

Page 8. Line 5. for *least* read *last*. p. 28. l. 6. for *nest* r. *west*. p. 20. l. 3. for *Famur* r. *Tamur*.
 p. 57. l. 28. for *void* r. *avoid*. p. 121. l. 18. for *Wickedness* r. *Wickedness*. p. 134. l. 15. for *really* r. *rarely*. p. 180. l. 20. for *Impudence* r. *Imprudence*. p. 272. l. 2. for *are* r. *are not*.

of

OF READING;

*With some Remarks upon that of
this Book.*

THERE IS NOT any thing more true than that Reading, Conversation, and Contemplation, are three of the most useful and most charming employments in the world. By Reading we enjoy the Dead, by Conversation the Living, and by Contemplation our Selves. Reading enriches the Memory, Conversation polishes the Wit, and Contemplation improves the Judgment. But among these noble Occupations of the Soul, if we would determine which is the most important; it must be confessed that Reading furnishes both the other: And without that our Contemplation would be of no advantage, and our Conversation without pleasure.

It is necessary to the Ladies of greatest Wit, as well as to those of the meanest; in that it gives to the former much the greater Lustre, as it mends the Imperfections and De-

B

fects

fects of the latter. It renders these tolerable and makes them admirable. And to say the truth, Reading shews us many things which our own reasoning could never discover ; it adds solidity to our thoughts, and a charming sweetness to our discourse : It finishes and compleats that which Nature has but only begun.

Nor is it strange that we should receive so great advantage from this, since the best Inventions in the world have ow'd their Original to Reading join'd with Judicious Thinking ; and the one is as the Father, the other a Mother to the finest Thoughts. And because neither of these separately can produce any thing of perfection, it is easie to comprehend why they who have no love for Books can speak nothing but what is trivial, and their conversation is no better than a persecution of their company.

That a good Wit may set off its self well enough without any thing of Study, as they say a good Face needs no Ornaments, is what I cannot, without dissimulation, allow. But on the contrary it must be said that as the stomachs which have greatest heat, have need of most food to keep the body in good plight and maintain life ; so the brightest Wits have most need of reading, to acquire thereby politeness and fulness ; and especially to moderate that vigour which cannot succeed but by chance when it is altogether alone. It is then
in

in this incomparable School they must learn what is excellent, to entertain the company that is good, and to be a remedy against the bad. Here the Ladies must receive antidotes against the persecutions of those whose discourse is all Idle and Impertinent. It is Reading that renders Conversation most grateful, and Solitude least tedious.

There are others nevertheless of another opinion, and such as think that 'tis sufficient, for learning the best things in the world, to enjoy the conversation of good Wits, without putting ones self to the trouble of turning over Books. But tho I grant that the Conversation of Worthy Persons is very necessary, and may as a living School influence us most powerfully while we see the rule and an excellent example together: Yet it seems to me that they who content themselves with the company of those that Know much, might become more compleat by reading their works. It is my Opinion, that if Conversation gives readiness, Reading affords abundance; that the former distributes only what this latter acquires, and is liberal of the riches which reading heaps together. Moreover, since men take more pains about what they write, than what they speak, and no man employs so much care in that which is to endure but for a moment, as in that which is to endure for ever: It must be own'd that we may rather expect to find excellent things in the

Writings of great Persons than in their Discourse ; for while they let nothing pass in their Books that is not finish'd, it is not possible but many things imperfect will slip from them in discourse and conversation.

Besides, there needs no more but an agreeable voice, or with some a great noise, a sweet accent, or a good grace to charm those that hear : But there is nothing to abuse or impose upon them that read. It is much more easie to deceive the Ear than the Eye. Discourses pass on with but a superficial notice taken of them ; and hardly have we the leisure to observe their defects : But Writings remain steadily expos'd to the Censures of those that judge, and the faults of them are never pardon'd. Herein there lies, as I think, a very good reason for the reading of good Books that the great Wits have in them left us their best performances ; and they have employ'd their watchings and studies, more to the Writing than Speaking well.

However, if it be necessary for the proof of this to join Experience with Reason, what can any desire for the Ornament of the Mind, that may not be met with in Books ? We may find there Instructions of every make, we may see Vertue under every sort of Viſage : We may there discover Truth in every representation of it we can desire ; we may see her with all her strength among the Philosophers ; with all her purity among the
Historians,

Historians, and with all her beauty, postures, and fine disguises in the Orators and Poets. And from this so agreeable variety it is possible for all sorts of humours and conditions to find content and instruction. It is here that Truth is not disorder'd by Passions; that she speaks without fear as well as without design; and dreads not to enter the Palaces, nor even the Presence of the greatest Monarchs.

For this reason too is Reading extreamly requisite to the Ladies; for since they want Mute Instructors as well as Princes, and as well Beauty as Royalty does not so easily find Teachers as Flatters; It is necessary that for the apprehending their defects they should learn sometimes, from the admonitions of the Dead, *That* which the Living dare not say to them. It is in Books alone that they can remark the imperfections of their minds, as in their Mirrors they discern those of their Faces. It is there they will find Judges that cannot be corrupted either by their Love or Hatred. It is there that the most fair, as well as the least so, are equally treated, having to do with Arbitrators that use the Eyes they have, only to put a difference between Vertue and Vice.

BUT HOWEVER, since all Books are not excellent, and there are many which truly deserve to be brought to no light but by the fire; the printing of which should

rather have been hindred than the reading them: It must be acknowledged that there is no less difficulty in choosing good Books to employ us when we are alone, than to choose good Wits for our entertainment in company. So that if any find they must not rely upon themselves in this matter for making of a good choice, they ought at least to follow the counsel of the most knowing and most vertuous, for fear that in doing they may happen to infect and debauch the Conscience.

I cannot forbear in this place to reprehend the tyranny of certain Vices which form among themselves a kind of empire, the censure of all things; and their approbation of their Cabal must be first obtained before a thing can deserve to be approved by others. As the value of Money derives it self from the Ordinance of the Prince, so must the value of Books and the purity of Language depend upon the opinion of these Imaginary Kings. It is not possible to avoid their sharp censure if we do not submit to their Judgment; both the Use and the Approbation are at their dispose: the credit they give is necessary to success, and there is no glory but what they distribute. And although the most able persons disappoint this small traffick and these ridiculous intreagues, there are nevertheless some weaker Spirits that commit themselves to their

their Conduct. And by this mistake it often comes to pass that very good Books are not relished at first while these petty Impostors decry them, and hinder their excellency from being known. They perswade themselves that when they have found great fault with the writings of others, we shall not think theirs, and that the Ladies will not think their sentiments as an Infallible Proof that at last Innocence will appear to all accusations, and Merit will overcome the force of envy; so the reputation of a while by their malice will be made the more gloriously; and expect to make it appear, that we ought to follow the advice of those who speak of Books according to truth, nor even according to their own inward opinion of them, but only according to some interest and design which they have propos'd to themselves. The Ladies ought to determine in this matter, That they must not so much defer to the Judgments of others, as altogether to renounce their own, and that there is no colour or appearance of reason for relying entirely upon so bad Conductors as these.

But I do not intend hereby to put upon them the trouble of reading all Books, or that they should affect to read a great number of them: On the contrary I esteem this as unprofitable as troublesome, and that in

reading divers Books we should do as they who visit several Countries, where they pass on without staying; for after they have seen and travest a great many, they chuse one at least where they fix their abode. Why should we seek in many Books what may be found in one alone? As if the Sun had need of the assistance of the Stars towards the making of Day, or that glorious Luminary had not light enough of his own to lighten the World.

It is not a multitude that wise and one single Book, if it be may be as serviceable as a Library to this purpose an admirable St. *Jerom*, who writing to *Eustochium* her to forsake all other reading, and give her self wholly to the study of Scriptures, says thus, "As you
 "many Jewels for the purchase of one
 "should have the beauty and worth
 "the other in it self; so you ought to renounce all sorts of Books besides, and confine
 "your self to that one wherein you may
 "find all that is necessary either to please
 "or instruct you.

And indeed to read but few Books, provided they be such as are useful and agreeable, will not diminish our advantage but refine it; we shall not be the less rich in improvement, but shall be less perplexed and confounded. On the other side, As they who
 eat

eat incessantly, contract but a mass of ill humours; so they that read too much are ordinarily incommoded by the confusion of their own thoughts and discourses. And as excess of food weakens the natural heat of the body, so an excess of reading at length dims the light and abates the vigour of the Spirit.

It is not then, at all necessary to read a great number of Books, but to read only those that are good, and, above all, to avoid the bad those with which we cannot become acquainted without the danger of becoming corrupted. It is necessary that in this place I warn of two grand Errors; and that I shew much fear on the one hand, and much confidence in this matter on the other. For there are some persons who will read the Books of the Heathens, and will allow themselves to use Romances. There are those that make Conscience of abstaining from the Books of the Ancient Poets and Philosophers, tho they be full of most excellent Precepts; and are afraid even of Vertue it self if it comes from the Schools of *Plato* or *Socrates*.

BUT NOT TO dissemble; Their scruple proceeds from their ignorance; and they fear, as the Holy Spirit speaks, where there is no cause of fear. For if God himself commanded the *Hebrews* to borrow the goods of the *Egyptians* that they might afterwards be

rather have been hindred than the reading them: It must be acknowledged that there is no less difficulty in choosing good Books to employ us when we are alone, than to choose good Wits for our entertainment in company. So that if any find they must not rely upon themselves in this matter for the making of a good choice, they ought at least to follow the counsel of the most knowing and most vertuous, for fear that in reading they may happen to infect the Mind or debauch the Conscience.

I cannot forbear in this place to reprehend the tyranny of certain Wits, who form among themselves a kind of Cabal for the censure of all things; and think the approbation of their Cabal must be first obtained before a thing can deserve to be approved by others. As the value of Money derives it self from the Ordinance of the Prince, so must the value of Books and the purity of Language depend upon the opinion of these Imaginary Kings. It is not possible to avoid their sharp censure if we do not submit to their Judgment; both the Use and the Approbation are at their dispose: the credit they give is necessary to success, and there is no glory but what they distribute. And although the most able persons disappoint this small traffick and these ridiculous intreagues, there are nevertheless some weaker spirits that commit themselves to
their

their Conduct. And by this mistake it often comes to pass that very good Books are not relished at first while these petty Impostors decry them, and hinder their excellency from being known. They perswade themselves that when they have found great fault with the writings of others, we shall read none but theirs, and that the Ladies will abide by their sentiments as an Infallible Rule. But as at last Innocence will appear in spight of all accusations, and Merit will shine in defiance of envy ; so the reputation which is checkt a while by their malice will spread it self the more gloriously ; and experience will make it appear, that we ought not to follow the advice of those who speak not of Books according to truth, nor even according to their own inward opinion of them, but only according to some interest and design which they have propos'd to themselves. The Ladies ought to determine in this matter, That they must not so much defer to the Judgments of others, as altogether to renounce their own, and that there is no colour or appearance of reason for relying entirely upon so bad Conductors as these.

But I do not intend hereby to put upon them the trouble of reading all Books, or that they should affect to read a great number of them : On the contrary I esteem this as unprofitable as troublesome, and that in

reading divers Books we should do as they who visit several Countries, where they pass on without staying; for after they have seen and travest a great many, they chuse one at least where they fix their abode. Why should we seek in many Books what may be found in one alone? As if the Sun had need of the assistance of the Stars towards the making of Day, or that glorious Luminary had not light enough of his own to enlighten the World.

It is not a multitude that wise men chuse; and one single Book, if it be very good, may be as serviceable as a Library. I find to this purpose an admirable Sentence in St. *Jerom*, who writing to *Furia* to perswade her to forsake all other reading and apply her self wholly to the study of the Sacred Scriptures, says thus, "As you would sell
 " many Jewels for the purchase of one which
 " should have the beauty and worth of all
 " the other in it self; so you ought to re-
 " nounce all sorts of Books besides, and confine
 " your self to that one wherein you may
 " find all that is necessary either to please
 " or instruct you.

And indeed to read but few Books, provided they be such as are useful and agreeable, will not diminish our advantage but refine it; we shall not be the less rich in improvement, but shall be less perplexed and confounded. On the other side, As they who
 eat

eat incessantly, contract but a mass of ill humours; so they that read too much are ordinarily incommoded by the confusion of their own thoughts and discourses. And as excess of food weakens the natural heat of the body, so an excess of reading at length dims the light and abates the vigour of the Spirit.

It is not then, at all necessary to read a multitude of Books, but to read only those that are good, and, above all, to avoid the desire of those with which we cannot become acquainted without the danger of becoming vicious. It is necessary that in this place I encounter two grand Errors; and that I attack too much fear on the one hand, and next too much confidence in this matter on the other: For there are some persons who scruple to read the Books of the Heathens that yet allow themselves to use Romances. There are those that make Conscience of abstaining from the Books of the Ancient Poets and Philosophers, tho they be full of most excellent Precepts; and are afraid even of Vertue it self if it comes from the Schools of *Plato* or *Socrates*.

BUT NOT TO dissemble; Their scruple proceeds from their ignorance; and they fear, as the Holy Spirit speaks, where there is no cause of fear. For if God himself commanded the *Hebrews* to borrow the goods of the *Egyptians* that they might afterwards
be

be consecrated to the service of the Tabernacle, why may not we take the good precepts that are in Heathen Authors, provided we do it with a design to employ them to the glory of God and the instruction of our Consciences? As the *Israelites* when they took along with them the Treasures of the *Egyptians*, left their Idols; so when we take the Knowledge of the Heathens, we do not also for the sake of that take their Errors and Idolatry. What danger can there be in ravishing this Divine Wealth from Profane Possessors, to make use of it to some better purpose? And since the Church of God has admitted the Infidels themselves to Baptism, why may we not render their Fables also and their Histories Christian? Especially when we find in them most excellent examples to form our manners by, and good rules for the direction of our Lives. If we do meet with some things there that are bad, we must do by their Books as the *Jews* did by the Captive Women whom they married, whose Nails they first pared and shaved off their Hair. I mean that in reading these Ancient Authors we should retrench what is superfluous, and whatever contradicts our belief. But I, all this while am in the wrong when I speak thus of the Ancients, for we do not derive any thing from the Heathens when we take whatever is excellent and good in their Books. This
is

Of Reading.

11

is the very wealth which they have stolen from our Fathers ; this is that sublime Philosophy of *Egypt* which they transported to *Athens*. Whatever their Poets or their Sophisters have of good in them, they drain'd our Prophets for it : This is the Learning of the *Caldeans* too, tho they have given it another form, and veil'd it under certain Riddles, that they might the better conceal their Theft.

So then we steal not from the Heathens what we take from them, but only recover what is our own. And so far is it from a fault to do this, that on the contrary, It is no less meritorious to draw these excellent instructions from their Books, than to deliver Innocent Captives from the hands of Infidels. But now as for the reading of Romances, we must needs speak of that after a very different manner ; for there is nothing in them that is not extreamly bad and extreamly dangerous, and That mingled with what is agreeable and pleasing ; but in the other there is excellent morality alloy'd with somewhat superfluous. There is indeed some appearance of Ill in the Writings of the Ancients, and there is nothing but an empty appearance of good in the Romances which are read, insomuch that if we take away the Mask, and pierce the Shell of the one and the other, we shall find nothing but Vice in these last mentioned, and nothing but

but Vertue in the other. We ought not to abandon the Ancients for so little evil as is in them, nor espouse the Romances for so little good as is in them: It is sufficient to retrench and pare the one sort, but the other are to be entirely thrown away.

IT MAY BE this my Opinion of them may be displeasing to some, to whom a Lie appears more beautiful than Truth; and who can take no delight, but in that which is unprofitable, and think the time cannot be well passed away unless it be lost. Why (say they) is the Reading of Romances forbidden, when the Use of the Poets is allow'd? And what pretence can there be to believe that Fictions are more dangerous in Prose than in Verse? What necessity is there, that for trivial Considerations we should deprive our selves of the sweetest Pleasures of Life? And what greater contentment can a man contrive for himself, than to read in Romances so many different successes, where we find our Passions still in motion according to the Adventures that are presented? Yea, and tho we know very well that the Objects which affect us, never had a being in the world and never will, yet we suffer our selves very often to entertain a true compassion for feigned miseries, and dissolve into tears for imaginary Shepherds. They add further, we ought not to throw away any Books because there is something of ill
in

in them; as it is not reasonable to resolve never to go to Sea because there are Shelves and Sands there, or because the art of Navigation is not infallibly successful, as appears in that there are some that yearly suffer Shipwreck either by misfortune or by ignorance. It is not at all just to abandon that which is good, because it is sometimes mingled with bad. Prudence teaches to separate the Vice from the Vertue, rather than to shun both together; otherwise we must pluck out our Eyes that we may not abuse our looks, and never venture to stir lest we should happen to fall.

Besides, why is it forbidden to Romances to present us with Lives of them that never were, any more than to Painters to draw Imaginary persons, or to paint according to their own fancy a piece of Grottesque? Why may not the one sort be permitted to divert the mind, by their Writings, as well as the other to refresh the Eye with their Pictures? Why is the Pen in this case to be accounted, more culpable than the Pencil, and may we not describe in words what we may by Pictures?

AND TO SAY truth, that we may answer to this Apology for Romances, I do not at all doubt that if any one of them could be found that were entirely honest, it were not Injustice to defend the reading of it. And provided one could find in them any good divertisement

vertisement without danger of corrupting the mind, there would be no cause to complain of them, any more than of those recreations that innocently pass the time, and refresh us after the fatigue of Study or Business. But when I think of the very ill things which the most of Romances are fill'd with, when I consider how many minds are debauched with these poisonous Books, I should account my self very guilty if I did not shew the snares to those who apprehend no danger, and declare open war with these corrupters of innocence.

And in truth, to examine this matter thoroughly, what satisfaction can any seek in Romances which may not be found in History? May we not see there the successes, the adventures, and the Events that are sufficiently pleasant or sufficiently tragick, as well of Love as Fortune, to move, or instruct, or divert? Can there be any thing more pleasant than to see the Birth, and the ruine of Empires and Monarchies, and to know in a little time that which was several long Ages in passing? Is not this a very commendable way to shorten the time when it seems too long, and even to bring back again that which was past? When we find there refreshment against weariness and remembrance to prevent oblivion. What can be said to prove that we cannot divert without corrupting our selves, or that the mind cannot be pleased

pleased unless we bring the conscience in danger?

But if I grant that sometimes there are good Instructions to be found in Romances: Yet what engagement are we under to conform our course of life to an imaginary Representation; or how shall we bring our selves to imitate examples which we know to be false? Do we miss of excellent Patterns in History, or do we need Painted and feigned Stars to serve us in the stead of those that adorn the Sky? This is a very great Errour: And if Bees are not able to gather Honey from Flowers in a Picture, as little is it possible to us to receive advantage from a History which we know was invented to please.

I may grant too that there is some pleasure in the reading of Romances: But is there not often an agreeable relish in the food that is poison'd? We must abandon that which pleases, to avoid that which would hurt, and renounce a great pleasure to avoid a little danger. Otherwise, to propose to our selves the separating what seems to be good in Romances from what is truly evil there; or to take pleasure in the relations without being defiled with the uncleanness which they convey under a disguise, and which throws out a thousand Hooks with the pleasant Lines to catch the fancy of the Reader; this were to throw ones self into a conflagration that we
might

might rescue something from the flames that is of little worth or importance: It were to propose to our selves the separating of Wine from the Poison, as we drink, after we had mingled them together. And indeed since we may find divertisement joyn'd with instruction in a History, why should we separate the profitable from the pleasant which we may enjoy together? To entertain the mind as well as to preserve the body there is no need that we separate the pleasure of the Palate from the usefulness of the Food; since reading as well as eating ought to strengthen at the same time that it pleases.

It is not only superfluous and needless to read these Books, but extreemly dangerous too: And how much pains soever we take to defend our selves from infection, yet we take it. The mischief enters insensibly into our Soul with the pleasing words, and under the charms of those adventures that affect us. Whatever Wit a person has, however innocent he is, yet as our bodies do without our consent partake of the quality of the things we eat; so our minds espouse, even in spite of us, the Spirit of the Books we read: Our humour is alter'd while we think not of it; we laugh with them that laugh, we are debauch'd with the Libertine, and we rave with the Melancholick. To that degree are we influenced as to find our selves altogether changed with our reading of some Books:

Books : we entertain other Passions and Steer another course of life.

The reason of this is not difficult to be found out : for as teeming Mothers cannot look intently upon some Pictures without giving their Infants some marks of what they observe, why should we not easily believe that the Lascivious stories in Romances may have the same effect upon our Imagination, and so leave some Spots upon the mind ? I grant indeed that we know what we read to be meer fiction ; yet it fails not for all that to give real motions while we read it ; the inclination that we have to evil is so strong that it improves by examples of evil, tho we know them to be false ones. As the Ivy mounts and supports its self by the hollow and dry Tree as well as by the sound and green one : so our natural corruption and irregular Appetites carry us so strongly to what is forbidden, that even a false and feigned History is sufficient to encourage and animate us to the most wicked undertakings. As the Birds were invited to peck at the Painted Grapes of *Xenxis*, so our Passions take fire at the Amours that are described in Romances.

The reading of so many wanton things in those Books heats a Person by little and little, and insensibly destroys that reluctancy and horror that should always possess us against all that is evil. We grow so familiar

with the Image of Vice, that we fear not when we meet with the thing it self. And after a Man has lost the modesty of his mind, he must be in a great deal of danger to lose also that which his modesty alone could have preserved. As the Water infallibly runs west when the Banks that restrain'd it are broken down, so our affections escape with all manner of liberty after that this honest fear which should govern them, is remov'd. This licentiousness indeed is not always form'd in a moment, nor do we become vicious all at once by this reading. The contagion of these Books gains upon the heart almost by insensible degrees, it works in the mind as Seed does in the Earth, first it spurts, then it shoots out, and grows every day stronger and stronger, that it may bring forth at last the pernicious Fruit of wickedness.

But this is not yet all the evil that attends the reading of Romances. But after it has render'd us bold enough, and given courage to do ill, in the next place it renders us ingenious and cunning: we derive from thence subtilty with confidence, and do not only learn the evil we should be ignorant of, but also the most delicate and charming ways of committing it. And to speak with reason how can it be imagin'd possible to read some Paragraphs in those Books without a great deal of danger? When we often see there,
this

this Woman quitting her Country and her Parents to run after a stranger, whom she fell in love with in a moment: Or read how the other found ways to receive Letters from her Gallants; or to give them their guilty assignations. These are nothing but Lessons of Artifice and skill, to teach persons how they may sin with subtilty. And for my part I am not able to apprehend with what appearance of reason any can justify so dangerous a Reading.

On the contrary, the *Lacedemonians* forbade the hearing of Comedies, because they present sometimes Murders, sometimes Thefts or Adulteries; and because in a well regulated Common-wealth nothing ought to be suffer'd that is contrary to the Law, not even in fictions or plays. Why then are these Romances permitted, where we read almost nothing but actions that are dishonest, examples that are lascivious, and passions that are extravagant? Shall we dare to read those things in Books which the Heathens forbid to be represented on Theaters? Shall it be said that Christians have less love for Vertue than Infidels? And, if they were afraid lest the People should be debauched by such sights, have not we reason to fear that weak minds may be corrupted by so filthy reading?

Nevertheless some may accuse me of too much severity, who will be vext to see me ravishing from them their beloved Idols, in taking away their Romances: who will be griev'd no less for their losing of these bad Books than the Women of whom the Holy Scripture speaks that were weeping for the loss of *Janimuz*. A falsehood shall often have more of the Vogue than truth: and they will more willingly read those Books that corrupt the manners than those that regulate them; and there are many Ladies that learn to tell without Book the Stories of *Amedis*, while they neglect those of the Holy Writt. Lastly, they take much less pleasure in the best Sermon, than in a sorry Comedy; and go oftner to hear a Buffoon than a Preacher. *Straton* complain'd very justly that he had fewer Scholars than *Menedemus*; because there are many more to be found who seek the School of Pleasure than there are that follow that of Vertue; and we love rather those who flatter us and make us laugh, than those that make us sad, and menace us tho' for our advantage.

AND THAT I may conceal nothing that is to the purpose, It is extreemly unhappy to mankind, that it is enough to raise a curiosity for the Reading of any Book, to know that it is forbidden, as we observe by daily experience. I think the same Evil Spirit who deceiv'd the first of Women possessing her

to her destruction with the pleasures of the Tree of Knowledge, does still inspire others after the same manner, promising their eyes shall be opened, and they shall see admirable things in what is forbidden them, and making them believe 'tis out of envy alone that such reading is forbidden them. This error corrupts a great number of those who are persuaded by their Flatterers, that as weak persons are always in danger even in the midst of things that are good; So the most able Spirits are never in danger, no not among a multitude of things that are bad: and therefore all reading is to be forbidden to the one sort, and all is to be permitted to the other. But for my part I must needs think the contrary, and declare that whatever measure of Wit any can have, they are notwithstanding always oblig'd to flee from danger. And I doubt there are very few that have the strong constitution of *Muhydates*, to nourish themselves with Poison, and live upon that which is mortal to all others. I approve no more of the Poets, than Romances, when there is any thing of ill in them: In what ever Period or Page I find any thing of Vice, it is my intention to make War with that. And let the World think of this matter what they will, I will eternally condemn these ill Books, which serve but as a School to teach persons to sin with address, and which one may very justly call the Politicks of the Vicious, and of the Libertines.

I declare my self an enemy to all that which is an enemy to Vertue. And, to speak in a few words what I think of the Reading of good or bad Books ; It is very necessary that they who are not able to make a difference, should follow the counsel of the most intelligent. And they who are the most capable to discern aright, in this matter, should yet not suffer themselves to be carried away with a curiosity to search into what is forbidden, which seems to be a humour even natural to the most. It is without all doubt that reading is both pleasant and useful ; and if care be taken to read such Books as are truly good, it will instruct the ignorant, reform the debauched, and divert those that are Melancholy. It affords remedies to them that are greatly afflicted, against the greater evil of Despair ; and to the happy and prosperous it administers antidotes against Insolence. It exhibits examples fit to humble the one sort, and to encourage the other. It makes our discourses the better when we entertain, and our thoughts when we are alone. Without that it is impossible both to meditate or to speak well. But this subject is too copious ; and if I should pursue it as I might, instead of putting an end to this discourse of it, I might begin and exhaust another. There is then no doubt to be made but the reading of honest Books is a most agreeable employment ; But we should always remember,

ber, that it is not enough that this be useful to the Understanding, unless it be so moreover to the Conscience. As Vertue is of much more worth than Knowledge; the Ladies ought to think, that 'tis of more avail to them to be good, than learned. And I fear not to say, that if they have a true Modesty they would blush no less at the reading of an ill Book, than if they were surprized alone, and shut up with a debauched Man.

THUS MUCH I thought fit to say concerning the reading of other Books: But to make now, as I promised, some remarks upon the reading of this of mine, I believe it will be very useful to the Ladies after that I have shewn them *why* I make so much use of Fables, *why* I make a great part of the Subjects I treat of to appear with two Faces; *why* I have not produced such general Instructions, as would have serv'd for the Men as well as the Women; and *why* I have not descended to instructions so particular as the Vulgar could wish for, that they might be touched the more sensibly. These are the four principal parts of this Book of which, it seems to me I ought to give an account, for the rendring it the more profitable to those who will take the Pains to read it.

AS FOR FABLES if I bring in some examples of them, I do this but to explain my self with the greater clearness; I do

it not to support my Arguments, but to embellish them; tis not to render Truth more strong, but only to make it more agreeable. All the World know that the examples of Fables divert us more than those of History, because they are contriv'd to please. The Historians recount successes, Poets invent them. So that when I serve my self of these only to recreate and not to convince, I have contented my self often to chuse the most diverting rather than the most probable. Besides; No one ought to think it strange if I have endeavour'd to render the Metamorphosis profitable, since it ought to be accommodated to the gust of those that are to be persuaded; and there are many that love Fables, and that read them. If we cannot utterly destroy Serpents out of the World, at least we have reason to make remedies of their Poison; and if the reading of fictions be dangerous, we endeavour to draw some profit from it, and to find good in that evil which we cannot hinder. Let it be consider'd that the Ancients have conceal'd in a manner, all their Morality and all their Divinity under Fables; and tho they could have serv'd themselves of Examples that were true, as well as of false; yet they sometimes chose the latter, to make their instructions the more sensible.

AND

AND AS I make use of Fables sometimes to render my thoughts the more clear, and the more agreeable, it is for the same reason too that I treat of many Subjects in the way of Problems. It is that the variety may gratifie, and that I may yield delight at the same time that I give instruction. I have constrain'd my self to endeavour that I might Please while I Teach. I believe that the Mind as well as the Eye is recreated with variety, and that men take delight to see both what is evil and what is good in all things. And moreover, since the best instructions ought to shew at the same time both what we ought to avoid and what to do; I have thought, that to succeed in both these things, it would be good to make appear on every Subject what it is that is worthy of our Love, and what will deserve our Hatred. And cannot every one see that there is nothing, but the matters of Faith, which we may not view under divers aspects? If the Melancholy Humour has something that is Good, is it not also true, that there is in it something Evil? If it be wise for deliberation, yet it is not sufficiently strong to enterprize: It is a Paralytick that has good Eyes, but the Hands are feeble, and it cannot move of it self. And may not as much be said of the Gay Humour; which on the one side appears fit to entertain, but on the other hand is found too much a
Prattler

Pratler to contain secrets, and too light for designs of Importance. I might here repeat several passages of my Book to demonstrates that if I have made use of Problems, it is because all moral actions are full of circumstances, which give occasion to consider the same thing under several visages, and make it now appear good, and anon to appear evil. Tho I have always concluded, that vertue ought to be lov'd, I have yet sometimes shewn, that it has two Extreame, of which men ought to be aware: Lest they run into the danger of being Prodigal instead of practising Liberality, or of becoming opinionative, while they aim at constancy, or fall into impudence while they seek to be pleasant. This is that, I believe, which deceives the Vulgar Readers, that while I present the excess and the defect, it seems to them as if I did praise and did condemn the same thing. Who are to understand that I am willing to shew what it is that abuses us, and to discover in every subject that which is worthy of our choice and of our aversion. If I attack the Crafty and Deceitful, and after that condemn the Imprudent; If I blame them that give too much, and then do not approve those that give too little; 'tis without doubt that some gross wits may imagin that I mingle my condemnations and praises; instead of acknowledging that this is the true way of putting a
diffe-

difference between Good and Evil, to do it agreeably. That this is not to confound but to separate; and these are not superfluous Problems, but reasonable Distinctions.

LET ME SPEAK NOW to those who say that this Book might have been made serviceable to the Men as well as to the Women; and that I have not descended to circumstances sufficiently particular for the subjects that I treat of. I own that a great part of my instructions, which are good for the one Sex, may be also useful to the other: But what is it that they could wish I had found out in particular for the Ladies, when they were to be taught the hatred of Vice and the pursuit of Vertue? Is there another and a particular Morality for them? Is there for them a distinct Christianity? Must we for them invent a new Religion or a particular Philosophy? Do not the Preachers speak at the same time concerning Vertues and Vices both to the one and the other Sex? Let these persons consider what 'tis they desire; since we have together the same Law, the Instructions may be common, provided the Examples be Particular. And this is that which I have constrain'd my self to do through the whole, as far as the matter would permit, and as seem'd to me decorous; that I might not engage my self too far in some certain

tain matters, wherein I should have rendered my self more Ridiculous than Useful.

IT IS TIME NOW to satisfy those who say that I disguise my Precepts under Praises, and that I ought to have descended to circumstances more particular. I wonder how they come to believe that the Ladies have need of Lessons so coarse, and a conduct so sensible. They are only the Blind that we lead by the Hand, it is enough to carry a Torch before those that have a good Sight. This is to do wrong to their good Wit or their good Nature. They must have less understanding to know what is good, or less inclination to practise it, to need this treatment. I am assured that they who are of the contrary opinion are some petty Regents in a Country Village, who would exercise a tyranny there where they ought rather to submit themselves. They should consider, I speak not here as a Master, but as a Counsellor: That I do not make Ordinances or Laws, but only, as I ought, I content my self to give advice. It is enough to me to praise good things, and to blame the bad, to say that they ought to shun the one and love the other. I should be ashamed to turn Legislator as some do, who in like matters talk thus, I will, I mean, It must be, I approve, I condemn. If the manner of their
-writing

writing be observ'd, one shall see that it has no whit more of force, but has less of respect. Their Style is not more strong, but more uncivil. After all, I conceive that, there is no better secret can be observ'd in Writing, than to render ones self the more agreeable, that one may be the more useful. There is a way to instruct without disobliging; and, I believe, they will not blame that Physician who had found an art to give good Medecines without disgust and bitterness. We may speak of the manner of Teaching, after that of Healing; and it must be believed that there is nothing done amiss; if both the one and the other be done agreeably. Provided we can succeed on this occasion, I judge it much better to use persuasions than Precepts. There is a great deal of difference between the Laws of an Emperor and those of a Philosopher: *Cæsar* and *Seneca* are not obeyed alike. The Commands of the one are supported by Power, those of the other by the Address. But suppose I had all this Power, what pretence can there be for my abusing it, so as to render my self troublesome, and to treat with rudeness a Sex to which we cannot speak with too great civility? And when 'tis said that I might give them Instructions more particular towards the rendering themselves excellent, without violating the respect that is their due; I answer, that this had not only

only been superfluous, but indeed it is altogether impossible. If I would descend to Instructions very particular, instead of one Book, I should have been constrain'd to compose many Volumes. What? When I have said that an Excellent Woman ought not to be Ignorant of what is becoming to her Age and her Condition; Must I needs then come to shew the way of playing on the Lute, or how she must Dance, or dress her Head, or make her Curtesie? Must I do the Office of a Musick-master instead of that of a Philosopher? I grant that these petty accomplishments are not to be neglected; but they are no more than the Nails or the Hair of an Excellent Woman: It is in Morality alone that these qualities are to be found which are requisite to form such a person as I recommend. I endeavour above all things to regulate the Mind and the Conscience. These are in my opinion the two parts the most considerable in the person that ought to be esteemed Excellent. This is, moreover, that which I have laboured in, and I have not treated of any other conditions of the Sex, either because it had been impertinent to my design, or because they are of so easie attainment, as there is no need to lose time in prescribing Rules for them. Thus I think I have said what I ought to these things for the satisfaction of those that would not take the pains to read Prefaces.

I CANNOT be advised to comply with those who say that there are many Comparisons in my Book, and but few Connexions. I shall content my self to send them to the reading of *Plutarch* or *Seneca*, to learn after what manner the greatest persons have treated of Morals. And above all, if there are here any thoughts that can please them, tho they have not so much of connexion as they could wish for, I entreat them not to cast them away for want of that; and to consider that Pearls may be very precious, tho they are not strung.

Of Conversation.

AS THERE IS nothing more important to the Ladies, than to know how to chuse good Wits to converse with, and good Books to read; so there is nothing more difficult than this: Because there are so many things evil which resemble the good, that without a great judgment, or extraordinary good fortune they can rarely make a good Election in these cases. It must needs be acknowledged a thing too difficult to pass the time innocently and pleasantly too either in company or retirement.

Indeed

Indeed, if we were still in the times of the primitive simplicity, where it were enough to succeed if we were only not dumb, and where, as yet, no other fault in Society entred but that of falshood: I own that an ingenuous plainness alone would be sufficient for them, and that Prudence would be a thing superfluous. But since we are fallen into an Age full of Artifice, wherein words which were invented to express our thoughts, seem now to be applied only to the concealing them with a good grace, it must be confest that Innocence it self has need of a Mask or Veil as well as their Faces, and 'tis no less imprudent to lay open ones Heart to those that are always upon the guard, than it were to march altogether naked among Enemies that are armed, whom we could neither offend, nor defend our selves from them.

If it were enough to take and give delight and pleasure in entertaining, and there were no better end of it than to pass away the time; there were not so much difficulty to perform it commendably, for this alone would be sufficient for that purpose; Not to be born Melancholy. But since the principal aim of Conversation, with the world, is to make ones self pass for a good Wit and a very judicious Person: It is for this reason that something else is necessary to them besides a good humour, and they ought

Of Conberfation. 33

ought at least to have as much of Address as of Vertue. It is very difficult to render ones self compleat in this matter, and the Wisest persons have confest, that there is not yet a School to be found where we may learn to manage well according to occasions, our discourse and our silence.

How many perfections are necessary to render one's self agreeable in conversation? How many qualities are requisite to be able to please many? Since even the most Excellent persons have divers inclinations, and Good sentiments are also different among themselves, as well as the good and the bad are contrary to each other. If plainness causes contempt in some; subtilty again will raise suspicion in others. If any deride those that are frank, others will mistrust those that are not so. This Lady wants a good Grace, the other wants to have Read more: One Sense is persecuted, while the other is contented; and you shall not dare sometimes to open your Eyes and your Ears together unless you will venture to be incommoded.

When *Xenxis* would draw a perfect Face, he proposed for his Pattern five of the best Faces in *Italy*, that he might take from each the Charms and the Features that he judged most powerful. And to draw a Character of the Lady that should be able to please in all Conversation, there would

D

need

34. Of Conversation.

need no fewer of charming qualities and rare conditions: Yea, It would not be too much for this purpose to have all that Nature can give, and Morality can teach. It is in this subject that we have need of all the most beautiful Ornaments of the Civil Life. And none ought to think it strange, if I speak here of those other excellent qualities that I recommend in the rest of this Book; for they all terminate in Conversation as in a Center; and it is not easy to touch this Point without touching at the same time upon the Lines that meet in it.

TO SAY THEN that which, at present, seems to me most necessary, I will content my self to wish the Ladies those three advantages which *Socrates* was wont to desire in his Disciples; they were Discretion, Silence, and Modesty. These are so amiable qualities, and so necessary to their conversation, that to judge of their importance we need only represent the absurd Vices which are contrary to them; as Tatling, Imprudence, and Impudence, the first of these defects brings with it usually the two latter. And it frequently comes to pass they who delight to talk much and give themselves leave to do so, They have not enough either of Prudence or Modesty. It must not be thought however that I have a design to take away the use of speech instead of regulating it. It would not be
at

at all handsome to attempt to compose a conversation of Persons that are dumb. But to make a strenuous opposition to a Vice that is the most troublesome and dangerous in company, I only beseech those Ladies, that cannot find themselves disposed to talk but sparingly, that they would consider: That if there be a time to say, something, and a time to say quite nothing there is never a time to say all. That they who talk much are not only in danger often of saying that which is false, but also of saying some things that are true, but unfit to be said; and so they would offend either Prudence or Truth, and many times both of these together: That they who talk so much with others, do in a manner never discourse themselves; that they see not their Thought till it has escaped them: That they apprehend too late in their repentance, that which they ought rather to have apprehended by foresight; and that regret and shame always follow very soon after that discourse which Prudence did not go before. Lastly, that the greatest part of their Sex need less pains to speak well than to speak but a little: and that Discretion is more difficult to them, and more necessary too than Eloquence.

It seems then to me that the Great *Numa* shew'd not less Judgment than Religion; when he erected an Altar to a tenth Muse, whom he styl'd *Tacita*: To shew, that when

36 Of Conversation.

all the Sciences together have their habitation in any one person, They are all unprofitable there without silence, and that 'tis in vain that any one has learnt the Art of speaking, unless he has also the Faculty of holding his Tongue. And in truth as it is much more easy to be an Orator than to be Wise, so Morality has much more difficulty to teach the Rules of keeping silence, than Rhetorick has to infuse those of Discourfing. Although what we know, were, without this, unuseful, and even without ornament; Yet we may also most justly place Silence among the most necessary Arts, and may say with that Wise King of the *Romans*, that the Nine Muses have not their Lustre entire without the addition of this for a tenth.

Silence gives, I know not how, a charming Grace even to discourse, as the Shadows do to the Colours in a Picture; and there is nothing more true than that Intervals well chosen in a discourse, do like the Pauses in Musick, set off and shew more evidently, whatever is truly fine and agreeable. When we speak none but the best things, yet even then is not Silence intirely superfluous. It relieves those that speak, or those that hear. It serves to prevent both sterility and tediousness, that the Speaker may not be too much exhausted nor the Hearer tired.

There

Of Conversation. 37

There are some however that think every one that puts in a word does them wrong, and takes something from them in conversation. But those that speak so much in Conversation themselves, do not deserve to be heard, because they require a civility that they will not pay. As they are incapable to speak what is fine themselves, so they are to understand it when spoken by others. And it must be believ'd they would not speak so many ill things if they would give themselves more leisure to hear those that are good.

And however there are too many to be found who affect and are proud of this impertinent Tattle, who think it a sign and proof of much Wit to speak much, and a disgrace to listen with silence to the discourses of others: Yet I fear not to say to them a truth which may be very useful, tho' it be not very pleasant. Those of this Humour are incapable of any trust, they can keep nothing secret of their designs or business. That which is only in the thoughts of the Wise, is in the Mouth of the Imprudent. And no otherwise than as they say of the Dead Sea, that nothing there will go to the bottom, and whatever is cast upon it, instead of sinking down, floats at the top of the Water. It is just after the same manner with some tatling humours, they can keep nothing to themselves; in-

stead of concealing wisely what is important, they make all appear both in their looks and discourses.

See here the unhappiness of those that talk much in an entertainment: Let them consider as much as they can their discourse, it is next to impossible but that in saying a great many things some of them will be such as ought not to be said. As it is difficult in removing the hand often, not to lay it sometimes upon the part that is ill; so 'tis as difficult in speaking much, to avoid touching sometimes upon our most secret and important designs. And if unthinkingly we many times lay our hand upon a place that is in pain, we as unthinkingly let our Tongue run into the predominant Passion of the Mind.

I know well enough there are those who promise themselves, they will never discover their Secrets, tho they do give themselves leave to talk much in Company: Imagining 'tis enough for the avoiding this to put themselves upon general matters, and to propose the speaking of things indifferent. But there is no manner of safety in this sort of Conduct; for tho they think themselves speaking only of Common things, they that have any measure of Wit above a very low degree, will easily remark some traces or shadows of their thought. The secret meaning appears through

Of Conversation. 39

through this Veil. And as we see the Needle touched with a Loadstone, tho' far distant from the Pole, yet turning that way, and pointing towards when it does not touch it; so our Speech has always I know not what of our Thought, and will shew it in the most distant Harangue, and among the matters that are the most Universal.

Let us set our selves as much as we will to dissemble and feign; after we have flutter'd a while about the secret of our Hearts like a Flie about the Candle, yet at last we shall there burn our Wings. We lose our selves, like them, there where we trifle and play. I am extremely in love with this Comparison, because those Women that are so much addicted to talk, do mightily resemble those little Creatures, who are made up altogether of Wings, who have no solidity of Body, who have nothing but Colour to derive to their young ones, and discover their weakness even by their lightness.

But if the Arguments I make use of do seem to be weak, I will give them a most excellent Example, which perhaps will have more effect than all the Precepts of Morality. For let them cast their Eyes but a little on her that ought to be the Rule as she is the Ornament of their Sex, they will perceive that the Holy

Scripture does not mention her speaking more than four or five times in her whole life. It may be this will seem to them very difficult; and I believe it were a miracle in some, if they could only hold their peace with discretion so many times as the Blessed Virgin is said to have spoke, and if they did abuse their speech but as seldom as she made use of hers. They are alas, too far from arriving at this perfection: Instead of an imitation of it, in not speaking but out of Charity or Modesty as she did, they hardly ever speak but to say something ill of others, or to boast something good of themselves. Their Discourse is all made up of Condemnations or Praises that are both unjust: It is nothing else but Vanity or Evil speaking.

There is no doubt then to be made but that many must be at great pains with themselves, to restrain, as they ought, the Liberty of their Tongue. From whence it is very hard for them to succeed well in entertaining; and the indiscretion of their discourse does very often expose them to the railery or hatred of the Publick. It is also the unhappiness of those who have not prudence enough to examin their own speeches, that they are yet less able to consider well what they hear said by others. Their liberty is blind, and utters upon all manner of occasions, and in all companies. Yet I do not design to say in this matter,
that

Of Conversation. 41

that there are not certain rencounters wherein they may speak with more freedom than in many others.

BUT IT OUGHT to be very well observed to whom we discover our sentiments, when there is danger in having them publish'd. And it would be to us an occasion for a most bitter repentance, to find that in the mouths of all the World, which ought never to have fled from our own. It seems to me therefore that the remedy for this mischief, that you may not be continually subject to the alarms of other peoples obloquy, nor yet forced to live always under a violent constraint, is this; to chuse well those whose company you intend mostly to frequent, and not to make acquaintance indifferently with all sorts of persons. And to speak my thoughts concerning the Election that ought to be made of the Wits or Humours capable of your Conversation: I find there are two sorts of persons whom you ought absolutely to fly; they are the Vicious and the Ignorant. Because the Conscience is not safe with the former, nor the Mind contented with the Latter. The entertainment of those who want Religion or Knowledge, ought to be entirely suspected: and we have reason to judge that it must have some grand design, to excuse two so great defects as Impiety and Ignorance.

This

This Evil Choice offends the Vertues either Moral or Christian. For is it not true that in communicating as freely with the meanest Spirits as with the most excellent, we oblige neither the one nor the other; because the latter are offended at this, and the former will deride and abuse it? This is imprudently to afford matter either to Hatred or Railery; you will in this way obtain the approbation of no body, while you think to merit that of every one. And in truth, I never see those Women which have a humour so universal, as to gratifie with the same aspect, indifferently, all the World, but it puts me in mind of that Ridiculous Image of the *Romans* which they called *Cisteria*, which was carried about to Feasts to pass away the time and make the Company laugh. We may see in such persons, as in this Pleasant Statue, the Looks, the Smiles, the Reverences, the Affectations that are altogether ridiculous.

But this that has been mention'd, is not the greatest of their Infelicities; their ill choice carries them insensibly into the extreamest dangers. One may see in them, that it was not without great reason said by the Philosophers, that Prudence is a piece the most necessary for a pattern to humane actions. When they are without conduct, they are also very often without Vertue; They become many times evil, tho they have

Of Conversation. 43

have not a design to be so, and even without thinking of it, when their complaisance is so unhappy as to engage them in the company of those that are debauched. After this, Vice slides in by little and little into the Soul, so that they perceive not the remedy 'till 'tis mortal and uncurable.

This is the most important part of the present Discourse : For since a diversity of humours cannot long subsist in Conversation, you must needs at length either imitate the Vicious or hate them ; you must be like them, or be their Enemy ; you must (do what you can) in communicating with them, either espouse their Wickedness, or defend your self against it. But tho one were assured of the Victory in this case, yet what need is there to give ones self the trouble of the Combat, since there is always much less danger and inconvenience, in the shunning of Temptations than in resisting them ?

Whatever can be said, we cannot dwell amidst Wickedness and Vice, but we must needs be infected. Example has a great deal of power, even upon the strongest minds. *Alcibiades* made profession of Vertue, while he kept company with *Socrates* ; but he gave up himself to Voluptuousness when he was amongst his Lovers. The Soul defiles it self insensibly while we converse with the Vicious, as the Face tanns, without our perceiving it when we travel in the hot Weather.

It

It is our unhappiness that we are more apt to receive evil than Good, that sickness conveys its self more easily than health; that the Conversation of Wicked Persons has more power to corrupt the Good, than that of the Vertuous to correct the Debauched.

It may be I may seem too severe, if I should propose to them for a Rule to their Converse, the Example of *Mary the Egyptian*, who would not hold communication with an Hermit that was a most vertuous Man, but when they had a River between them. I doubt not but those that are good may be seen much nearer than that, and without danger. But as for those that are Vicious and Licentious, you should keep as far from them as you can: Their hatred will do you less harm than their Conversation; and these are Enemies that will do you more mischief by Peace with them than by War.

And in truth the Unhappiness of the first Woman ought to make all other the more fearful, for they may see in her fall the common cause of their own. What advantage can they have in talking too privately with the Serpent? In being bold in the Company of Devils as *Eve* was, instead of being ashamed in the company even of Angels, as was the Blessed Virgin? And to suffer the Conversation of Licentious Wits which are full

full of the Old Serpents Fatal Poison, and have none but ill designs against their Innocence.

LASTLY, THE second sort of persons, whose company they ought to shun, are the Ignorant and Stupid; because the Conversation of such is shameful, unpleasant, and unprofitable; and that of good Wits and Understanding Persons is honourable, pleasant, and fruitful. Indeed we daily experience sufficiently, that the persons which have had no improvement from Study and Reading, have always something that is rude in them; and if they produce any thing, 'tis as those wild Trees that are never grafted nor drest, and which bear no Fruit but what is Insipid, or Harsh and Sower. And, to reflect a little upon another Error that deserves a publick complaint: Is it not a strange thing to see that the Sciences, and especially the Art of Reasoning are not to be found but in Colledges? And that we dare not degrade Philosophy so as to make it the subject of Conversation? As if it were impossible or unjust to strip it of perplexity, that it may be made speak with a better grace. As if it were a matter of Conscience to turn it into a Vulgar Language; or as if we ought to be reasonable but in Latin only; or as if the rarest Secrets, or the brightest things in Nature might not be exprest in our Mother-tongue.

This

46 Of Conberſation.

This can no one believe without being in an Error : We have Terms in our own Language that are fit to expreſs whatever is of greateſt force, or is moſt ſubtil in reaſoning : And if the moſt ſolid knowledge did ſometimes ſerve us, for the ſubject of our Diſcourſes, it would be experienced, that there is more pleaſure as well as more of profit in entertaining one another with ſerious ſubjects, than in talking of the Tippet in faſhion, of Peticoats, of the News of the Place, or of Amorous Intrigues. To ſpeak ſincerely, I cannot excuſe thoſe Women that will make a dozen wiſe perſons hold their Tongues, to liſten to a paltry Vjolin : Who give their Ear more readily to a company of Scurrilous Jeſts, or Malicious Slanders, than to the moſt excellent and important things : Who make a great ſcruple of ſpoiling a Song with the leaſt noiſe, and make no Conſcience of giving a thouſand interruptions to the beſt Diſcourſe one can entertain them with : And who are raviſht with the Company of the moſt Impertinent Fops, provided they be but finely dreſt, and treat them with the titles of Queen or Empreſs.

They would utterly deride theſe perſons nevertheless for their Complements inſtead of eſteeming them, if they could but underſtand how much it calls in queſtion their
OWN

Of Conversation. 47

own Wit, to approve, and take so much liking to those that have none. For as we judge those Stomachs weak, that cannot digest any but the lightest Food; so we may very justly question the strength of their Wit, who can relish nothing that is solid: Their humour appears by their approbation; and one may know what they can best do, by what they love. This defect is, in truth, a very great one: But since I have a design to touch also upon some others which are no less observable in Conversation; having spoken of those Women that despise knowledge and good discourse, let us speak next of them that prophane and abuse it.

FOR AS THE Ladies that are utterly unacquainted with Study, and great strangers to Reading, are most truly barren; so they that have been conversant in these, are oftentimes a little confused and troublesome. There is nothing but disorder in their thoughts and conceptions, and constraint and affectation in what they say. It seems as if their Wit had not heat enough to digest that which their Reading furnishes them with; And one may see in the inequality and confusion of their Discourse, even at the same time that they speak of excellent things, that to have Marble and Porphiry and the most excellent Materials by us, is not enough for the building a beautiful

beautiful Palace, if one be not a skilful Architect to dispose them. These persons are mightily subject to Repetitions; for having tackt their Idea to particular words and phrases, and fill'd their thoughts with some particular matters and Subjects, their Spirit is not at liberty to invent other when it is necessary. They are so inflav'd to their Memory, that they can make as it were no use of their Judgment.

It is for this reason that they cannot speak but by common Place; and that they enlarge themselves so much when they are upon a subject wherein they have some advantage, that they are ready to speak all, even to the Margins, Leaves, Quotations and other superfluous circumstances. I could as willingly find my self among the Conferences of the Ministers of State, when they are disputing the Place of Congress, the Day, the Matter; and the Arbiters. To deliver these Women from the defect, it were best to send them to the Theater of Humane life, or some other large and Voluminous Book in which they might read all that they have a mind to speak of.

Their Repartees and their Complementments are Orations; when they have begun a discourse, before they can make an end, they must exhaust their Chapter; they cease not to speak till they have no more to say. They much resemble those who re-
cite

ſite Plays on the Theater, who are not able to add to, or diminish in the leaſt from their Leſſon without putting themſelves out and forgetting the reſt. It is true, they make themſelves admired in ſome Rencounters; but this is more by chance than that they can be at all aſſured of it. And to ſpeak the Truth, that they may ſeemable perſons, they have need to ſpeak to thoſe that are not ſo.

If by miſfortune they are led from what they have ſome knowledge of, and are made fall upon a Subject that is unknown to them, and where Reasoning or Judgment is more requiſite than Memory, you ſhall then at the ſame time perceive their Weakneſs and their Vanity, in that they can neither hold their peace, nor ſpeak with any good Grace. The force upon their Looks ſhews that they have not Modeſty enough to keep ſilent, nor Ability to diſcourſe; either they are ſilent with regret, or ſpeak with diſorder.

Theſe are the Principal Vices of Converſation, which I thought neceſſary to be obſerv'd, that the good qualities might appear the better after I had painted out the bad. So that now to make an Abridgment of my Thoughts in this matter, I judge that there is nothing more Important and conducing to our Converſing with
E good

good success: than to know well our own humour: that we may duly regulate that; or to know the Humours of others, that we may please them, or defend our selves from them. Knowledge, and a sweet Temper are the two qualifications most necessary for an entertainment: Without the former the Conversation will be too trivial, without the other too rude and tiresome.

Those Women that speak little, as well as they that speak much, ought to consider that Modesty is necessary to Silence as well as to Discourse; as it frees the one from Contempt and the other from Affectation. And whatsoever Humour they are of, that they may avoid the danger of being persecuted or debauched, it would be good for them never to seek the Conversation but of two sorts of persons: That of the best Wits, because such will excuse most easily their defects, and can best apprehend and acknowledge their merits: And that of the most Vertuous; for when the Licentious can do no harm to their Conscience, yet they will do it to their Reputation, and will render them but infamous, if they cannot make them vicious.

*Of the Chearful Humour and the
Melancholy.*

THERE IS NOTHING more necessary to the Ladies for Conversation, than to know well their own Humour; that they may Reform it if bad, or Polish it if it be good. This is the foundation of all that which is of any Importance in this matter. But as there are two sorts of Humours that may both succeed well, each of them in their several way, I think fit at present to make a comparison of them in this Discourse, that they may the better remark that which is good or which is evil, in the one and the other. And to describe in the first place that which is of greatest esteem in Society; It must be own'd, that the Gay and Chearful Humour has here by much the advantage of the Melancholy, which truly is not unfit for Knowledge, but is a little too heavy for Discourse, and too coarse for the Genteel Carriage or Repartee. The merry Humours have a much better Grace, and more liberty in all they do; and so they are much better receiv'd in Company, as being the more natural in their Affections, less constrain'd in their Deportment, and the most innocent in their Designs.

52 Of the Chearful Humour

Whatever some say in Favour of the Melancholy ; If their Meditations are commendable in some things , 'tis certain they have their bad as well as good effects ; and they that call it the Mother of Wisdom, ought to acknowledg that 'tis very often the Mother of Extravagance. They would persuade that such Spirits discover many things, and that they go far in Contemplation ; but their Voyage is often so long too that they never return again : Or if they do return again, this is as the Pilgrims, who abandon their own Country to run needlessly into strange ones, without any other advantage, than to bring back from thence Poverty and Weariness. Musing is a Labyrinth wherein they lose themselves easily, and from which they get out with difficulty.

Nevertheless they name Melancholy the Element of Good wits, thinking to excuse their Weakness by giving it a specious Name : But as the Lame do not gain any Glory when they spend a great deal of Time and Labour to make but a little way ; so these poring Spirits do not deserve any praise, for being long in finding out that which others of stronger parts could better find and with less pains. Those that are more subtle have the same advantage over them, as Birds that can fly, have over Serpents that can only creep,
or

or such as Angels have of Bodies and material things.

Upon the whole, I do not at all comprehend, why they make a boast of their speaking but little; for their Silence proceeds rather from their Barrenness than their Discretion; and if they hold their peace on many occasions, it is not so much to chuse words, as to seek them. These persons would need take but little pains to become good Disciples of *Pythagoras*: Were it not that while they hold their peace but meerly out of necessity, they are not capable to learn how to speak with address. They want a School quite contrary to that of *Pythagoras*, where they may study that Readiness which they want; they have more need of Medicin than Precept; and to cure them it is not only necessary to read Lessons, but also to work Miracles.

As it seems much more easy for the Fire to descend than for the Earth to mount; so 'tis possible that they who have a ready forward Humour, may moderate it by reading and experience: But they that have the gross and heavy Souls, let them employ themselves in whatever study they will, have a great deal of difficulty to render them more lively or more subtle. The Birds have Wings that enable them to fly; yet they fold them up when they will to refresh themselves: And the most transcendent

54 Of the Cheerful Humour

Spirits can do as much as they, either for action or repose. But when the Melancholy set themselves to animate their faintness, they put themselves into the danger of *Icarus*, who was too dull and had not enough of Address, to fly upon the Wings of Artifice: Their Discourse and their behaviour are altogether unhandsome when they force themselves to express and shew in them a heat that they have not in their nature. They resemble those old Men, who run, when they think only to go, or mend their pace but by chance; and then they lose their breath all at once after the least effort, because they do not wisely accommodate their pace to their weakness.

Whatever some say in commendation of their Coldness; To Imagine that this is of excellent use in business, I think a Man had need to be possess'd with the same humour. If they succeed in that, it is more the effect of Chance than of Knowledge. If the forward Spirits are to be accused for taking Occasions too soon, and snatching them before they be ripe, the Melancholy are in danger of coming always too late and of staying till they are rotten; and if the former do not attend till they present, the later think not of them many times but when they are past. They are too subject both to Fear and to Despair.

As

As

and the Melancholy 55

As they are without heat, they are without action; and their icy humour represents all things impossible, whether they are what they should avoid or what they should undertake. Their Senses are stupified with a Lethargy, and cannot be roused but by cutting or burning them. They seem to want a resurrection rather than an awakening, and are a sort of Sick persons that must be made to die, to teach them that they are not dead. If they have Judgment to deliberate, they have almost no Confidence to resolve, and yet have less of Courage to execute. This is a Paralytick Vertue that needs to be spur'd upon occasions, and remains always Languishing with remedies at hand, without being able to make use of them, if it be not stir'd up with great endeavour.

It were indeed too great an offence to believe that there is not a great number of very wise and excellent persons of this temper: But also it ought to be allow'd they would be too injurious to Wisdom and Vertue that should make it always musing and reserv'd; as if they who have nothing to fear or desire out of themselves, ought not at all to shew a smiling Countenance for a Testimony of the satisfaction of their Conscience. On the contrary, if Serpents breed in Standing Waters, so do ill Thoughts enjoy themselves in this

56 Of the Cheerful Humour

muddy Humour : And if the Spirit of such persons is fit to invent what is wicked, their Face is no less fit to cover it.

When a Rust is gotten among the Wheels of a Clock, there is no more any Rule in the motions, or any certainty in the Dial of it. And when a profound Melancholy has mingled it self with our Thoughts, the Spirit is full of Inquietude, and the Visage of Grimaces. What Light or what Reason can be expected where a multitude of black Fumes from Melancholy infect the Brain? Just as the *Demons* have sometimes mingled themselves with a Storm to kill the Men, or burn the Temples; so they often serve themselves of this gloomy Humour to possess the soul with Superstition, Despair or Hypocrisy. *Cesar* well testified what we ought to judge of these Melancholy Humours, when he openly declar'd, that he fear'd a great deal more, those that were Melancholy, as *Brutus*, than those that were Merry, as *Dolabella*.

It ought not to be taken ill if I, to describe this Melancholy Humour, do say some of those things that it produces, that we may the better observe the nature of the Cause in that of the Effects. There are then some *Hypochondriacks* to whom Mirth and innocent freedom are no less displeasing, than Day-light to an Owl: and as their Visage shews always I know not what
of

of Fatal in it ; so one cannot chuse but have an Aversion for their sad Mein.

Nevertheless, if their Coldness is only an effect of the Temperament, it deserves either Excuse or Compassion : But if it proceeds from Artifice, it cannot be exempted from Suspicion or Blame. So that to examine well the difference that is usual between these two Humours ; The Modesty of the Native Plainness is all in the Heart ; that of the Labour'd and endeavour'd Persons is all on the Forehead and the Outside. The One in truth are not Good, nor the Other Bad, but in appearance. I grant the Casuists have some reason to say of Sports and Pastimes as the Physicians judge of Mushrooms, That the best of them are good for nothing : And yet I am not willing so absolutely to decry those pleasures that are indifferent in themselves, and which the Intention alone can as well render Good as Bad. *St. Elizabeth of Hungary* did not refuse sometimes to dance, yet nevertheless her Good Humour did not hinder her from being Canonized. Those that lay so great restraint upon the Usage of things that are honest, are usually very free in the enjoyment of what is forbidden, when they can avoid the having a Witness to their Actions.

And nevertheless it is the Unhappiness of these Times, that people live under so much disguise and endeavour, that one hardly

58 Of the Chearful Humour

ly can laugh without giving occasion of suspicion to weak minds, or of slander to those that are wicked; as if a chearful humour were a certain sign either of a light Spirit or a small Judgment.

We ought rather to deride such a Censure, than be troubled at it. And those Ladies that would preserve their good humour, without putting constraints upon themselves out of regard to this Vulgar Error, they ought also to forbid themselves as much as may be, either desire or regret, as being two of the greatest Tyrants of our Repose; since the one carries us away to the time to come, and the other makes us return to that which is past; Taking away from us the liberty of making the present time happy, while we desire those things that are not yet come, or unprofitably regret those that are past. The abler Spirits do easily resist and defie this Tyranny. As when a Ship is tost in a mighty Tempest, tho the Mast be broken and the Sailstorn in pieces, yet the Needle is always pointed towards the Polar Star; so ought we always to demonstrate a steddiness of Mind in the most tragick misfortunes, and to shew a temper equal amidst the greatest inequality of Affairs. And as the Winds can easily drive the Ship besides the Port she designs for, but not the Needle from pointing to the Pole: After the same manner when some Ob-
stacles

stacles retard our pretensions, they ought not for all that to drive us from our Reason, or make shipwreck of our Constancy.

NOW I HAVE SAID what there is of good that may be found in the Gay and Cheerful Humour, it is time to examine what evil may be met with in it. And since we have remarked the defects which many attribute to Melancholy, let us betake ourselves a while to mention its good effects and just praises. This is that which renders the Mind subtle for the Sciences, indefatigable for affairs, serious in Conversation, constant in Designs, modest in good Fortune, patient under Bad, and judicious and reasonable in all Things. It is of this just and equal Temperament that Vertue serves herself to appear with all her Ornaments: This Nature has been wont to chuse when she would form Conquerors or Philosophers: And this is that, which Grace it self has always employ'd to give to the World the most extraordinary persons. It seems as if the Persons of this Humour were born Wise; that Nature had given them more than Study and Endeavour can procure to others: And that without falling under the inconveniences of Old Age, they possess in good time almost all its maturity. 'Tis true, they reproach it with this, that their Meditation is of more worth than their Discourse: But they ought to know, that as the Judgment

60 Of the Chearful Humour

ment of such persons is solid, so they commonly disdain that superfluous ornament, and shew which the slighter Wits make so much use of, to procure credit among the Vulgar. In this their Modesty they resemble the Eagle in the *Apocalypse*, that had Light within, and had Eyes under his Wings: Whereas the great Talkers have them only upon the Feathers, as the Peacocks on those of their Train; being no otherwise reasonable, but in Colour and Appearance.

I do not at all deny but the Gay and Chearful Humours have something of pleasantness, but they are also subject to very great defects: For as much as the Railery and Jestings which they often engage in, tho it be agreeable to some, yet it usually does offend more than it pleases. And one shall often see this sort of Wits, among themselves, begin in Jest, and play, like Puppies, and soon end in Earnest and quarrel. But especially when Religion or any ones Reputation is their Subject; 'tis the easiest thing in the World for them to fall into Impiety and Slander. And since we cannot rally the Great without Imprudence, nor the Miserable without Cruelty; and then in doing this, we should always contradict either the Rules of Policy, or the Laws of Nature: The graver Spirits have a great deal of reason to abstain from that which makes them, who profess it, pass for Buffoons or for Enemies,

and the Melancholy 61

Enemies, and which often gives themselves in the end an occasion to weep, after that they have provided for others something to laugh at.

For my part, I think it no disparagement to Melancholy, to own that it has no inclination to so ridiculous a quality, which supposes always a lightness of Spirit, and very often a great liberty of Conscience. It was this giddy-headed Temper which was that of the foolish Virgins, and of the same are they who have more Wit than Judgment: Who nevertheless seem for the present to have some Light, but it is an *ignis fatuus*, or such as, like a Spark, shines but a moment e're it goes out. They let themselves be impos'd upon, for want of being able to foresee far enough into Affairs of Importance; whereas the Wise are never drowsie when they should prepare themselves for good, or dangerous occasions, for fear they should afterwards be oblig'd to Repentance and Shame.

And to speak of things as they are: Since the Spirit and the Sense have a quarrel which will last as long as life, and the Soul is not strong but in the weakness of the Body, as in the ruin of an Enemy; There is some ground to say, that when the Humour is so brisk and so free, that it is become the more strong; and on the contrary when it is Humbled and Melancholy, 'tis become a
Slave

62 Of the Chearful Humour

Slave to Reason ; like a Maid-servant that shews discontent in her looks, when she is hardly treated by her Mistress.

The Joy which arises from the Conscience has marks that are altogether particular ; 'tis the purest that is , and resembles the unspotted brightness of the Stars, which always cast forth an Equal Lustre : But that which comes from the Body or the Temper, is like the Comets, which have there nourishment from below by the exhalations of the Earth , which presage none but dire Events, and which seem to dance in the Air, while they run after the Vapours that feed them, but go out as soon as they are destitute of that Matter. The Passion of the Melancholy has nothing parallel to these Tragick Meteors, either in their formation, or in what maintains them : Their Amity has no Aim besides the Goods of the Mind : And as the Fire of their Affection is most pure, so it loses nothing of its ardour, it endures always in an equal state, like that which some Philosophers fancied to be under the Orb of the Moon.

I readily acknowledge, as to what regards Friendship, that the Gay Humors are therein more forward and free ; but then the Melancholy are more discreet in it, and fitter to be trusted. These adhere constantly to their designs, while the other change every moment their Passions, and lend themselves

out

out to every Object that presents. A very little matter serves either to overcome or persuade them. Inconstancy is almost inseparable from this Humour, and if they are not capable of corruption through malice, at least they are liable to it by weakness. But if their Plainness merits some Favour, I cannot for all that count it reasonable, that we ought to esteem so very much a Natural Goodness, which is rather an effect of the Temper, than the Choice. When a Person cannot be Bad, there is no such great glory in being Good: And if the Simple do not much mischief, they are not to be thought the less culpable for that, since notwithstanding they may do all that they know.

And if it be said, that tho they are not better, yet they are more happy than the others, because their mind is without inquietude as it is without design: In truth, it were the greatest injury that could be done them, to speak of them in this manner: For this were to found their Felicity in their Defect, and to own that they are no otherwise happy, but because they are Stupid or Ignorant. If a Marble Stone feels nothing of pain, we do not say for that reason it is very well: We do not account it in health, but unsensible. It is after this manner that the thoughtless are not unhappy; for 'tis the wanting of a sense of it that hinders them

64 Of the Chearful Humour

them from being so : And this is no very honourable advantage to them; that they are free from care and trouble, as Stones are free from Sickness, or Beasts from Remorse of Conscience.

If the Stupid are found sometimes at the same point with the Philosophers in the tranquillity of their Mind, 'tis yet with a great deal of difference between them; in that the latter surmount what the others are ignorant of. The Serpents under the Earth are not less safe from a Tempest, than any persons that are above the Clouds : The meaner Spirits, like them by creeping, find their safety in their weakness : But it is much more glorious to be above the Storm than beneath it, and to have it under our Feet than over our Heads.

Since the true Felicity cannot be acquir'd without Vertue and Morality, the Happiness of the Simple is of another Nature than that of the Wise : And, in my Opinion, they are no otherwise happy in this World, than those in a feigned *Limbus* in the other, where they stay between good and bad, without being touched by either of them. The Melancholy do not live in this indifference, they owe not their felicity to the Ignorance, but to the Goodness of their Minds; and it would be too shameful a happiness to them, and such as they would complain of, if it were necessary to them to be insensible

and the Melancholy. 65

sible of Good, that they might be so of Evil.

To know how much the Melancholy Humour excels all other, it ought to be consider'd, that they who are forward and light are no less incapable to defend themselves from Misfortunes, than to tast the true Pleasures: Their Heat precipitates them into extreams: They do nothing but in Frolick, as if they were made up only of Sulphur and Gun-powder; they need but a mear Spark to set on Fire both their Actions and their Thoughts: And of this there is no other remedy but to wait for the end of their Impetuosity, which often tires its own self, and of it self the Fire goes out. The Spirits that are without Conduct in their Enterprises, are also without Conrage in their Afflictions: They are a bad sort of Souldiers that use well neither the Sword nor the Buckler; and the same lightness which makes them very rash in their onset, does also render them weary and impatient when they come to suffer or defend themselves.

On the contrary, the Melancholy have always the Spirit equal: They are free from Insolence in a Good Fortune, and from Despair under an Evil One. They endure what they cannot overcome, they surmount the Maladies of the Soul by Strong Reasoning, and those of the Body by Invincible Patience.

66 Of the Chearful Humour

And if heretofore a Man could find himself bold enough to assault the person of a Duke of *Milan* in the middle of his Guards, in the face of his Court, and even in a Church, only for the having practised several times upon the Picture of this Prince; What boldness ought those Wise Men to have who are of this Temper, what can they find of new in any Events that may be able to put them in a Wonder? Instead of being surprized, they discover things to come at a distance by their foresight, that they may in good time accustom themselves to them. They render things as easie to them by Meditation, as they become to the Vulgar by long experience.

It ought not to be strange, if the Melancholick are very constant; and one can never see them troubled, even when they are constrain'd to give way to Force, since they always reserve a secret place within themselves where the Storms of Fortune know not how to arrive. It is thither that the Soul withdraws her self to maintain an eternal Serenity; there she gains an Absolute Empire over her Opinions: And there she entertains her self alone, even in the midst of Company, without suffering any interruption of her repose and silence by the Throng or Tumults of the World. It is in this solitude and abstractedness of the Superior Part in us that the Spirit fortifies it
self

and the Melancholy. 67

self, that Morality is learnt; and that some possess before-hand, even without a multitude of years and a long experience, the Prudence of Old Men, and the Wisdom of Philosophers. Lastly, It is in this place that we shall have always the means of having pleasant Thoughts, if we preserve in our selves the Images of those things that are agreeable: For if the present Objects displease us, we may by entring into our selves render our Minds easie and content, while our Senses are under a persecution. We may entertain our selves with the thoughts of a beauty, at the same time when an ugly Face is before our Eyes.

But who can ever enough commend this Noble Contemplation of the Melancholick? Since 'tis by this that the Soul seems to quit, when it will, the troublesome commerce of the Senses. And we may consider with an Attention the less distracted, what we are, when our Imagination represents us to our selves; which it does more clearly and with less danger than the foolish *Narcissus* is said to have seen himself in the Fountain. I do not wonder at all that the Poets feign'd he destroy'd himself; because he sought himself out of himself: It is in truth impossible we should find our selves but in our selves; by all that is besides; we meet with nothing but our appearance and shadow: Inasmuch, that without the Use of

F 2

this

68 Of the Cheerful Humour

this Noble Meditation, to which the Melancholy Temper is disposed, a man seems to have his Reason imperfect and even unuseful. For as the Bees must retire themselves to the making of Honey, after they have been collecting Matter for it among the Flowers: So 'tis necessary, that after we have view'd a diversity of Objects, we should retire within our selves to derive the fruit of our Observation, and to make the Consequences it will afford. Without this, whatever Study or Experience we have, it will be nothing but a confusion and medley of things; we may gather good things, but shall be very ill Managers of them; our Actions will appear without Conduct, our Thoughts without Order, and our Discourse without Judgment.

The greatest part of the grosser Spirits have a sentiment quite contrary to this, and cannot bring themselves to imagine, that there is any other contemplation but that of Fools, and such as are distemper'd. And in truth this Meditation in them, would cause no less hurt than it does fear of it; it would be as contrary to them as it is unpleasing: It dazzles the Spirits of those that are wicked; the one sort it Blinds, and others it severely Scourges. It is not to be imagin'd, that they who have nothing but Darkness in the Mind, and Guilt in the Conscience, can take any delight to enter
into

and the Melancholy. 69

into themselves, or to search there for satisfaction or repose. But to despise Contemplation, because there are some that may lose themselves in it, is not this as great an Error as if one should find fault with the Sun because the Owls cannot bear his brightness; without considering that the Eagles can stedfastly behold it; and that we should not tax this glorious Star, for that our feeble Eyes are dazzled by his Rayes, and we find Darknes even in the Source of Light it self.

I have now said enough concerning these two Humours: Having thus compar'd them together, there is not a person who may not easily judge what ought to be her usage of both, that she may succeed well in Conversation. If the Chearful humour seems most agreeable, the Melancholy seems most solid; the one is the most beautiful, the other the most rich. They have both of them something of Good, and something of Evil; and indeed, to speak my Opinion, I judge that as the mixture of hot and cold is the support of our lives, so all the force of agreeableness and a good Grace is derived from the tempering of these two Humours, when it is so done, that the one serves for a remedy to the other. And if the *Romans* esteem'd those the best of their Tribunes, who testified the most inclination to the Senate, and those the wisest among the Senators,

nators, which most favoured the interests of the People; in like manner, I think, we may say that the most excellent among the Cheerful Persons, are they who approach nearest to the Melancholy; and among the Melancholy, they are the best who have most Gayety of Mind. For being thus temper'd, the first shall be the more Discreet, and the latter less Austere and Imposing.

Of Reputation.

BE IT SO THAT Reputation is a Mighty Treasure, and that it serves no less to Vertue, than Day-light does to a Picture to make it appear: Nevertheless, if it be well considered after what manner some lose, or some possess it in these days, we might rank it among the Goods of Fortune, in which the Foolish have many times a larger share than the persons of greatest Merit. If there were Wise and Just Judges to distribute this, it were enough to be Vertuous for the obtaining a Reputation and Esteem among Men: But it does frequently depend upon so very ill Arbitrators, that if it were not for this, that we are always oblig'd to avoid, as much as we can, the giving of Scandal; it would really become those that are Wise to content themselves with

with the Testimony of a good Conscience alone, without any further care for the Opinion of the Imprudent, which a meer Chance may render either Good or Bad. This is a thing that depends too little upon our selves, to be that which can render us happy: And this were a Felicity but very ill secured, which the Ignorance or the Malice of an Enemy can take from us.

A Renown or Great Fame is many times an Effect which seems to have nothing of a Cause, and which rises like those groundless Alarms which put sometimes a whole Army into a Pannick Fear and Disorder, while they can no ways find out what should be the subject or occasion of it. I must also approve the opinion of those who compare it to the Winds, because it rises and falls as lightly as they, and above all, because there is no one knows certainly the Original of them. And since it is then so uncertain a thing, why should any man labour, with great unquietness of mind, to know how he stands in the opinion of others, and afflict himself for the Error of the Vulgar, as if it were but now, that the Ignorant had begun to mistake or lie?

I have taken occasion to wonder, with *Aristotle*, that the Ancients gave more recompences to strength and force of the Body, than to the abilities of the Mind,

distributing their Lawrels to a bulky Wrestler, and not to the Wise or Prudent. It cannot be but that Ignorance and Poverty must have hinder'd them from putting a Price upon Vertue. Ignorance might do this, because Vertue being a thing that is hid in the Heart, men are often abused in the judgments which they make of it: And Poverty might cause it too, because when they were forced to acknowledge its excellency, they had nothing in the World sufficiently precious to make Rewards or Garlands worthy of it. Now then if Human Judgments are so full of uncertainty, what advantage or what wrong can Vertue receive from their Error? In truth they cannot recompence it, since they cannot know it; they are not knowing enough for this, nor rich enough. O what Blindness and what Levity is in the World! May we not see some persuading themselves there is great Vertue there, where there is truly nothing but Vice; and some, on the contrary, that give base and unworthy names to excellent things? Like Astrologers, that call some of the Stars the Bull or the Scorpion, which have nevertheless nothing either of Fury or Venom, but only Purity and Light.

I could heartily wish that they who meddle with judging of things without knowing well the nature of them, might be Punisht as *Midas* was. This Ignorant Judge

pre-

prefer'd the rustick Sound of *Pan's* Pipe before the ravishing Harmony of *Apollo's* Lute, giving his Vote to that which made the greatest noise. And his fit condemnation was to wear Asses Ears, having but an Asses Head and Wit before. His Judgment was very like to that of a great many, who esteem things only by their Colour and Mein; and they are no less worthy of long Ears for a mark of their stupidity. And indeed to make more account of the Appearance than the Truth of a thing, Is not this to prefer *Pan* to *Apollo*, a Pipe before a Lute, and a Noise before a Harmony? There is a great deal of Brutality in an Opinion so barbarous. And nevertheless there are of such as these a great many in the World; and these are they who give a bad repute to those that merit only a good one. I shall therefore reserve my Resentment for those who can give just condemnations or praises; and I shall not be at all of the mind to suffer my self to be uneasy at that which I ought to deride. There are very few persons that judge with any soundness, of that which they see: The mind of the most does not penetrate far, it stops as the Eyes do at the Colour and Surface. Their Opinion is of very little Importance, and I think; that, without scandal, 'tis enough to avoid their slander, without seeking their approbation.

We

We live in an Age of Pomp and Ostentation, wherein Morality is overthrown; and the Vertues of the Time consist only in the excess and extravagance. To gain the reputation of a Devout person one must run even into Superstition and Hypocrisy: And the Politick Spirits do by Christianity just as the Stoicks did by Philosophy; to abuse the Vulgar, they fram'd Imaginary Vertues to which humane Nature could never attain. It is a mighty unhappiness that Honesty is not to be found in Commerce, nor Purity in Religion. And that we must in common life as well as at Court, demand often more than we can hope for or deserve, that we may gain Reputation and Credit.

BUT TO GIVE my Opinion as a Philosopher as well as Casuist; It ought not to be concluded that we may neglect a Reputation, because it is ill distributed. This disorder does not at all dispense with our Duty; and it would as ill become us to render our selves infamous for this reason, as to commit Murders or Thefts because there are some Thieves absolved, and perhaps some that are innocent punished for that Crime. Since all Women are not very Prudent, and there are many that govern themselves more by Example than Reason, the wiser part ought at least to consider, that Reputation is then a publick Good;

Good, and they ought as much to endeavour the remedying an ill Repute, as to extinguish a Conflagration, or to purge a common Contagion.

In truth it is worthy to be laught at, that any should give themselves all manner of liberty, as we may see some do, because Vile Slander puts sometimes the most Vertuous in the rank of the greatest Debauchees, to give them an ill Repute; and sometimes the most vicious with the best Men, to give them a good one. This is wholly to prefer Imposture to Truth, and Opinion to a good Conscience. As if a King should cause Torches to be lighted up at Noon-day, because the Sun shines upon Peasants as well as upon him; or as if he should chuse to be sick and lose his Health because, his Subjects are well. We ought not to become vicious because of the ill Opinion any have of us, but rather endeavour always to live so much the better, that we may force them to have a good one. When one cannot be so happy as to gain this, yet he should incessantly endeavour to practise so much Vertue as to deserve it. The Testimony of the Conscience is more to be esteem'd than all this report of us. When there are neither Friends nor Enemies present to praise or to blame, those that are Fair find always enough to satisfy themselves in their Looking-glass, and those that are homely

homely, see there enough to afflict them. The Conscience does as much for Vice and for Vertue, as the Glass does for the Visage. The Insolent are far from troubling themselves for a good Reputation, since they rather do all they can to obtain a bad one. To judge rightly of the Lives of some Women, it seems as if they would imitate the *Lesbia* in *Martial*, who was wont to seek for Pomp and Clamour, that she might shew her self debauched, and who took more pleasure in the Spectatours than in the Adulterers. She was for her brutish Pleasures as the Sophists were for their Vertue; They could not do what was good, nor she what was bad, but upon Theaters.

NEVERTHELESS, since tis not enough to be vertuous, but we must satisfie Men that we are so, we ought to take care what appearance and shew we make, and to take away pretence from Slanderers, who are wont to *make* Men criminal, when they do not *find* them so. I grant that *Socrates* had no love for *Alciabiades* but such as was altogether Honorable, and that his Affection was not contrary to his Philosophy: Nevertheless when he made him his Bed-fellow, he ought at least so to have managed his coming in and going out, as to take from them that should see him going away in the Morning,

ing, all pretence to ground a Slander upon the time and the place of this Young-Mans Visit. Though the Oracle publish the Wisdom of *Socrates*, yet the Imprudence of his Conduct in this Friendship cannot be justified. Prudence and Love can hardly consist even in the best Wits; and it is for this perhaps that the Poets have feign'd *Cupid* to be always a Child; for let Love grow never so old, it never arrives at years of Discretion. His Childhood endures as long as himself, for fear he should be ashamed of the wanton Tricks of his Sports and Pass-times. I wonder not at all if Love makes a Man lose his Reputation, since it makes him lose his Wit; and since *Socrates* himself with all his Wisdom and Vertue could not defend himself from the injury of reproach in a simple Friendship.

Among the *Romans*, *Claudia* the Vestal was innocent; and yet she was accused of having lost her Honour, only because she order'd her self with too much Art and Curiosity: And they thought it cause enough to condemn her, because she took a little more pains about her Habit and Discourse than was well suiting with such a Votary. It cannot be said but this was a very slight ground for the forming of her Process; but certainly she had never been saved but by a Miracle: When she drew a Ship along with her Girdle, which
many

many Engines, and many Men had not been able to stir.

In truth we are oblig'd to do all that we are able, to take away all matter of Slander and to avoid Scandal: But the most Wise and even the most Vertuous often labour in this matter in vain. For let them do or not do, there are no Rules or means Infalible for the preserving a Reputation; and since it depends upon the Opinion of others, it follows Fortune more than Prudence. It ought not to be believ'd that Innocence with a good conduct are sufficient for this, when the Son of God himself, who is the Source of all Goodness and Wisdom, saw his Reputation slur'd for a time by the Impostures of his Enemies, who made him pass for a Glutton and a Wine-bibber. This Example alone does abundantly shew that there must be some other thing than Address and Vertue to maintain a Reputation.

Moreover, there is I know not what Infelicity that follows persons of worth, which exposes them to Obloquy they know not why; and this happens more often to the vertuous than to others; for as much as their refusals create them Enemies, and they often put themselves in danger, like *Susanna*, of being accus'd of that crime which they would not commit. There are even some sorts of Visages that contract a Slander, and this proceeds sometimes from hence, That Foolish People
 imagine

imagine a Man cannot laugh without being Vicious, and that there is no Innocence where there is not Grief and Melancholy. This is the Judgment of the Ignorant, who believe that Vertue ought always to weep, and who know not that it ought to guard it self as much against a dull Humour as against Cloudy Weather, and that of all sorts of Wits those are the best, that have some Gayety. And it is necessary that persons be very heavy, to believe that we cannot have a good Humour without an evil Conscience.

And besides, if there were no Malice, or a Man had no Enemies in the World, there is almost nothing so assured or evidently true to which Men may not give several Faces: If we consider our Actions well, it will appear that they are all liable to a different interpretation. Who can certainly judge (where there is no Christianity,) of a Man that gives his Alms in publick, Whether this be for a good Example, or out of Vanity? May it not be said of a person that is Patient, that this is a sign he has little Sense, as well as that he has this Vertue? How know we whether a pleasant Humour be a Testimony of Licentiousness or of Freedom? Those that are serious, may they not pass for stupid or vain persons as well as for modest? The Interpretation does all; and tho the things are not indifferent, yet we speak of them more according

according to our Sentiment, than according to their Nature. After all this, Those that are Wise ought to seek their consolation in their own Mind; and after they have done all they can to merit a good Reputation, they ought then to disdain a bad one.

The disdain of Injuries is the death of Slander, but the resentment revives it. This is to acknowledge the force of its Arms, when we confess it has been able to hurt us. And they who are hurried into an excess of concern when they find themselves injur'd, satisfy the designs of those that sought to offend them; for this is to render our Enemy pleas'd when we give him Testimony that he hinders us from being so.

Tho our Reputation may be stolen from us, or retrencht in some measure, yet at last it will return again; As our Hair grows again after 'tis cut, provided it have but a Root, and our Innocence and Patience do remain. In every case if they blame us unjustly, we ought to feel more consolation in the Truth than trouble for the Imposture. The Innocent should no more afflict themselves when they are said to be guilty, than if it should be said they were sick when they are in a good state of Health. It is from hence we may learn why the Vertuous are less revengeful when they are blamed than the Vicious. For as those that are not beautiful, would yet be often esteem'd so with their Disguises: So
the

Of Reputation. 81

the dishonest persons endeavour by their Artifices to gain the opinion of being very wise.

It is for this that such Women are so very troublesome, and that one shall not dare to touch them in the least where they are hurt, but presently they are extreamly disorder'd. All the World knows that *Lucrece*, when she kill'd her self for the Violence which she suffer'd from *Tarquin*, said as she was dying, she had two Testimonies of her Innocence that were unrepachable, the one was, her Blood in the sight of Men, and her mind before the Gods. But I am almost of the Opinion of a great Author, who accuses her of not having been always so chaste as she would fain be reputed. And if she had not been at all Criminal, she might without doubt have found more remedy for her trouble in her Conscience than in Death. They say she resisted more out of humour, or some secret considerations, than out of Vertue; and having passed away the time with other Galants of less quality than this Tyrant, she fear'd that all her other faults would be discover'd by this; and this fear they say made her resolve to leave the World by her own guilty Hand, rather than to see her self outlive the loss of her Reputation.

I declare that it is of more worth to be good in Effect, than in Appearance; and that

an honest Woman ought to esteem Vertue beyond Reputation : But I believe too, that if one be very sensible of the Importance of her Fame, she will with the more care avoid the danger of losing it : Since they who have a true sense of Honour, ought to esteem themselves unhappy when they are put to the trouble of justifying themselves, and that when they are not guilty : They ought always to have before their Eyes that which was said by *Julius Caesar*, when he divorced his Wife *Pompeia*, and that even after she had made her Innocency appear : It is not enough, said the Emperour, that the Wife of *Caesar* be Innocent, but she ought also to be free from Suspicion.

Of the Inclination to Vertue, and of Devotion.

THEY WHO Imagine that the Piety of Women is nothing else but the tenderness of their Complexion, and the weakness of their Spirit, are not at all of our Opinion : And they offer them no less affront in their endeavour to take away this Divine quality, than if they had attempted to Rob their Faces of their Eyes. It must be believ'd that

that they who desire a Woman without Devotion, do also wish her to be without Modesty too. And after they have taken from her all Sentiments of Piety, they design and intend next to ravish something else. This is an old Errour, which begun with the World it self : And the Libertins do nothing else in this, with the Women of the present Age, than what the Devil practis'd upon the first Woman, whom he first depriv'd of the fear of God; to the end he might afterwards persuade her to all manner of Liberty.

But it evidences a great want of Judgment for any to seek the Reputation of a good Wit in the contempt of Religion; and that especially during a Reign, and in a Court where Religion and Piety are so much revered by the greatest. None can now observe the common Rules of Policy while they Violate the Rules of their Religion. And 'tis a very happy necessity which renders the looser Spirits of the Court without excuse, when at this day they may see, that if they will not render themselves ridiculous, they must seek their Salvation together with their Fortune.

It is then necessary that the Ladies, who would testifie that they have Inclinations to Vertue, should gratifie more those that make profession of this, than the Others; for fear lest it be believed, if they favour the Licentious or the stupid, that there is some resemblance

blance that has contriv'd a secret correspondence between them. They that shew a hatred or coldness towards Persons of worth and Religion, declare by the aversion they have to Good things, that they are not born but for Evil. The weak Spirits have not Credit enough to be able to publish their Vertues, nor enough Discretion to conceal their Defects.

And Nevertheless we may often see that they who are vain, or designing, do seek among the foolish their Admirers and Confidants; as if this were not a choice that is altogether blind, to take so ill Judges of their Merit, and so bad Secretaries of their Pastimes. Ignorance and Simplicity are two Confidants that are very unsafe. Interest and persuasion easily make them speak of the things they are acquainted with: And Imprudence even when it is not sollicitated, will often speak of that which ought to be buried in Silence. The Physician of *Midas* foolishly address'd to the Reeds, that he might keep a Secret from the long Ears of his Master. He had a great deal better have made use of an Honest and Wise Man than of this Plant: And the stupid, as well as he, prove at their cost that there can be no true Fidelity there, where there is no Wit nor Reason. There are to this purpose more Histories than Fables, and we need not return to the Times that are past to seek Examples there, of what we may see every moment,

moment, in a sufficient number, to afford Matter for many Tragedies.

AND AS FOR Piety, If any Imagine that it takes away good Humour, and renders a Woman too Melancholy for company; In truth I do not approve of those who put their Devotion upon the Rack, to force it to make wry Faces; as if one could not be saved without making one's self terrible. When the Grace of God is in a Soul, the Visage is sensible of the sweetness, and does not at all carry the Lines and Colours of the Damned or of *Demons*. The Weather is clouded when 'tis disposed to a Tempest; and these dejected Looks prognostick something fatal in the Thought.

They that have no design to commit any thing that is evil, nor remorse in the Soul for any that they have committed, have not this sad Humour, which we account to be as contrary to Devotion as it is to Decency. We do not take any thing from Repentance for this: The Summer has Rain as well as the Winter, and Love may no less be turn'd into Tears than Fear. Joy weeps as well as Sadness; and the remembrance of our sins will give us no more Grief than the return of Gods Favour which attends our Repentance, will give of Joy and Pleasure. As it does sometimes Rain, even while the Sun shines, so Repentance often makes Tears fall from a smiling Countenance.

Whatever the Libertins say, Devotion is not contrary to Civility: If the Bees gather their Hony from the Flowers without doing them any wrong when they touch them; Devotion does much more in whatever profession it is found, by embelishing it and rendering it more agreeable. As Jewels cast into Hony, get there a greater lustre, each of them according to their natural colour: So there is not any condition in the World which does not become more beautiful and more estimable when 'tis accompanied with Piety. It is for this that Divine Wisdom has said, the Righteous are the Excellent of the Earth. It renders those that retire, more chearful, and those that live more in the World, less insolent; it moderates the pleasures of the one sort, and sweetens the austerities of the other. Marriage is hereby the more commendable, War the more just, Commerce the more faithful, and the Court the more Honourable. Is there not a great deal of Ignorance and Tyranny to say, that this ought no where to be found but in a Cloyster, and that it cannot be mingled with the Affairs of the World without making some encroachment upon the *Carthusians* or *Capuchins*?

OTHERS THERE are that have a Sentiment quite contrary to this. We are in an Age wherein many make no account of this, unless it be excessive in the Exter-
our

our and show ; Infomuch that many content themselves with the decency of Devotion alone, or rather with a Humane Religion. I can never see this Monstrous Devotion but it puts me in mind of the famous Trojan Horse, which was full of Enemies within ; and to which nevertheless under the pretext of Piety, they did not meerly open a Gate, but even broke down a part of their Wall, that they might receive with the more solemnity this Present dedicated to *Minerva*. Nevertheless, let us content our selves to have not approved this Appearance of these Times, for fear we should fall into some mischief, if we undertake to oppose it: *Laocoon*, who took his Lance in his Hand to make a search with it into that *Machin*, was punisht for his Curiosity, tho it were just. If we should venture to make War with the Hypocrites, we should have too many Enemies to encounter, and might be more assured of their Hatred than of their Amendment.

It is true, that those Women who use so much Ceremony, and practise so much Subtilty, that they may deceive some Eyes with pretences to conscience, do resemble those Spiders who employ a great deal of pains to make Nets, wherein themselves at last are Intangled ; without any other advantage by their Labour and Art, but that of catching a few Flies. The smaller Wits admire this Artifice ; but the great despise it.

it. And for my part I am not able to conceive how the excellent Woman can take Dreams for Revelations, or suffer herself to be imposed upon by such Illusions and Ravings. Those Women that are most excessively carelling when they are Married, have often a desire to deceive while they flatter; insomuch that heretofore those Ladies were suspected for the death of their Husbands, who made excessive Lamentations over their Tombs. In a private life as well as in publick Pretence is blamable, and this great ostentation is altogether suspicious at least, if it be not vicious. As for what concerns Conversation, the best Artifice is to have nothing of Dissimulation; for 'tis more easy to be good indeed, than to be so in appearance only; and there is very often less difficulty to regulate the Conscience, than the Mein. And to say the truth, is it not a blindness that is most extream, to expect from the hands of Men a recompence of the service which we render to God, and to seek for another Approver of our Actions besides him who is truly the Sole and Final Judge of them? It is to have very wrong Notions of Piety; to practise it because some commend it; or to renounce, because others blame it: These are Motives too humane for so Divine a thing.

THE SUPERSTITIOUS have more scruple at the commission of a small sin, than of a great one; and are like the *Jews*, who made more Conscience of entring into the Judgment-Hall, than of condemning Jesus Christ; and of omitting to wash their Hands, than of persecuting the Innocent. It is true, that such Women have deriv'd this from the first, who made more Ceremony, and testified more Fear at touching the Forbidden Fruit, than at eating it. These Questions, these Accounts, these Scruples without Reason, give no trouble at all to the Excellent Persons; who follow the example of *Alexander*, while they vertuously cut the troublesome Knots, rather than incommode themselves to untie them, as the Vulgar do, to whom the true Devotion is very often unknown.

Nevertheless, for fear we fall out of one extream into another, we ought so to behave our selves in blaming Superstition, as they that burnt the Houses in *Asia* in the time of *Xerxes*. They did not dare to touch those Buildings that were adjoining to Temples, not only to prevent those Sacred Places from being burnt, but also for fear they should suffer the least blemish. In like manner we must pardon in this case many things, which we might blame without injustice to them, but yet not without danger of carrying weak Spirits thereby even into

into Impiety. When Superstition proceeds from Simplicity, it seems worthy of pity or of excuse: But when it comes from Artifice, it does deserve to be punisht. The Ear that covers the Grain, or the Leaves about the Fruit, are not at all made in vain: Nature has given them these, either to preserve, or to adorn them. The Ceremonies are of the same use in Religion: And as Devotion is inseparable from Love; it sometimes borrows the transports of that, and makes the Servants of God run beyond their bounds, as well as the Prophane, who honour their Mistresses even to their Hair and the Letters of their Names. It is very reasonable that Divine Love should testifie more ardour in its effects than the worldly. And 'tis for this reason that a great Author did very handsomely say, That if the *Cupid* of the Poets has two Wings, our Seraphims have six.

Of Chastity, and of Complaisance.

IT IS BUT reasonable that we join together these two amiable qualities, to reduce them both to a perfect temper ; since there are some Women render themselves unsociable that they may keep themselves Chast ; and there are others refuse nothing that they may be complaisant. This is in truth to be of too good, or too bad an Humour ; and is no other than the changing one Vice into another, instead of shunning Vice. If the Vertue has two extreams that do equally transgress the rules of it, we ought not to make use of one of these to defend our selves from the other : As if a man ought to be Covetous, for fear he should be Prodigal, or throw himself into the Fire to save himself from the Water. Morality does not at all approve this Conduct, that does not teach to chuse Sins, but to shun them, That we may rest in Vertue alone, which is difficult to be found, because the excess or the defect conceal it from the Eyes of the Ignorant. Those Women that think they cannot be strictly honest and yet sufficiently obliging, understand but ill the Nature of these Vertues : For in truth they are not contrary, they are only divers, and their correspondence is too
natural

natural for them not to be able to subsist in the same Subject. When they are both of them there in a just degree, they have a much better Grace in each others company than either of them would have alone. Hence it is that *Theodosius* was the most commended of all the Emperors, in that he seem'd to have good qualities contrary to each other to raise his esteem: His sweetness and gentleness took away nothing from his Majesty, nor his Severity from his gentle Condescension.

THERE ARE SOME that have a Countenance ridiculous rather than smiling, they do so much constrain themselves to be agreeable; and others are so much under a constraint to put on Gravity, that they have the Aspect of furious Persons or School-mistresses. However it be, to give a true account of these two Humours, it must be said, that they are usually suspected either of Artifice or Stupidity: In that, if there be no Design in them, then there is no Wit; and if there be Design, the one feign themselves grave that they may deceive, and the other feign themselves easie, only to be deceived: The latter believe the World will ascribe their Familiarity to their Humour, the former imagine that their cold behaviour will be accounted an effect of their Vertue. These disguised persons can never succeed long, especially with those of good wit; among whom the very best means to appear Chast is really to be so.

As

As the greatest Hypocrites are the least devout, so the most Reserv'd are often the least Chast. *Hecuba* might have a handfom Mask, and *Helen* an ugly one; but this Deformity and that Beauty would impose upon none but those Eyes which saw no farther than the outward appearance. It will in the end be discovered what we are in truth. And as Innocence falsely accused, does become afterwards more glorious when it appears in spight of its Enemies: The Vice which is unjustly commended, appears to us the more shameful, as soon as we are disabused.

BUT TO SPEAK some of the Praises of Chastity, it must be that this Quality is Divine, since even its proper enemies make great account of it; and the most debauched have less respect for her that yields, than for that resists. We may learn from the Poets, that *Daphne*, while she fled from the guilty embraces of *Apollo*, was turn'd into a Lawrel, from which ever after he took the Garlands that he wore: But on the contrary, when *Io* had consented to the Will of *Jupiter*, she was changed into a Cow. How different were these two Metamorphoses, and how much more glorious marks had the Refusal than the Consent! Respect accompanies Desire, but Disdain always succeeds Possession in these Cases. And it seems those Women are no longer Amiable after they are become Amorous.

The

The God *Pan* being raviſht with the Beauties of a Nymph, employ'd Violence when Intreaties had fail'd him: She ran even to the brink of a River, where ſhe was juſt ready to throw her ſelf in, that ſhe might ſave her Honour with the loſs of her Life; there the God took pity on her and turn'd her into a Reed, of which he made a Pipe for the Honour of her Reſiſtance; and that he might have her every moment between his Hands and his Lips. Thoſe that are gain'd, are not treated after that manner, for as much as they have not that Honour now, which made them ſought and deſired with ſo much care and pains.

Thoſe Women that promiſe themſelves they will never go ſo far, and give no favours but ſuch indifferent ones as Civility will permit, after they have ſuffer'd more than they ought, are carried on further than they thought to be. I could wiſh that the Imprudence of many Ladies did not often give a truth to the Fable of *Europe*. This young Princeſs was innocently walking on the Seaſhore, where ſhe view'd her Herds as they were grazing by her; ſhe ſees among them a Bull that pleaſed her more than all the reſt; ſhe approaches to ſtroak and play with him, ſhe mounts upon his Back when ſhe ſees him ſo gentle, but ſhe found her ruin at laſt there where ſhe ſought only diverſion. He enters by little and little into the

water

wat
helo
ing
that
one
cou
life
with
tran
to h
diſg
So
will
free
than
bold
with
He
the
pear
perf
then
the
paſs
alwa
their
Soot
then
late,
whe
one.

water with her, and so far at last that she beheld in vain the brink of the Ocean without being able to return to it. She saw her self at that time between two frightful dangers, one of which she must needs fall into : She could not quit him without the loss of her life, nor commit her self to his conduct without the loss of her Honour. She was transported to an Isle, where she sadly knew to her cost, that this Bull was a God thus disguised to surprise her.

See herein what will happen to those that will play with Beasts, when they are more free or more familiar with Stupid Persons than with Good Wits. *Europe* was more bold with a Bull than she would have been with *Jupiter*, if he had but declared himself : He made his approaches more easily under the Hide of a Beast, than under the appearance of a God. The most cunning persons, after his example, will counterfeit themselves silly and ignorant, to arrive with the more ease at what they design : They pass from small Favours to great ones, and always advance their design, till they change their Entreaties into Threatnings, and their Soothing into Violence. And it is from thenceforth that such acknowledge, too late, that the true Simplicity is ill treated when it entertains it self with the false one.

The fear of losing their Reputation, after they have given some advantages, does corrupt many: But they deserve to be punished for their easiness, that they may learn, at their cost, that there is no great safety with persons that are disguised, and that those Spirits that are least dissembled, are the more vertuous, and the more capable of Friendship. Those that would disparage the Ladies, say that the Foolish are more fortunate and happy with them than the most Worthy Persons: Because the Violence of the one sort succeeds better than the Persuasions of the other; and because they are less ashamed to let Favours be wrested from them, than to bestow them, to the end they may excuse their consent by the force. But these are Opinions that deserve rather to be despised than credited, and which no less contradict the Sincerity, than the Vertue of the Ladies; who ordinarily do not fall into any evil, but by reason that they have not artifice enough against that of their Enemies.

BUT THAT WE may blame Affectation after we have commended Plainness: It is not very easie to employ so many inventions, as some do, that they may appear amiable, without having some design in so doing. They that give Love for their pleasure, are often forced to receive it by necessity. Those Women would work a Miracle,

cle, in carrying so much fire in their Eyes, without having any kindle in the Soul; and how resolv'd soever they may be, their Looks have not the priviledge of the Sun, who burns all below without inflaming his own Sphere. These are ill Weapons, these of Love, that one can rarely make use of them to hurt others, but first or last she shall hurt her self.

I have heretofore a long time mus'd upon the Statue of *Venus*, made by *Phidias*, under the feet of which, he placed a Tortoise. I judge that the greatest Mystery that can therein be discovered is, that the Tortoises go but very little, or if they remove themselves sometimes, they are always arm'd and cover'd, carrying their House along with them. *Venus* despises the Solitary and the Cautious: Those Women that seek with so much Passion all sorts of Conversation, do please her more for the encrease of her Empire: And above all things, she has always affected Nudity, because it was that which gain'd her the Apple.

Those Women that are so much pleased to find themselves often in the midst of their Enemies, have something of a desire to be overcome. And in truth, how good soever a Company may be, yet Distrust is always better than too much Boldness: And since she who ought to be the Pattern of her Sex, was confus'd at the presence of an
H Angel,

Angel, who appear'd to her in the likeness of a Man; The Women also ought always to testifie some bashfulness in the company of men, tho when they are under the form of an Angel: Unless it were so, that they having no other than his design, the Women also would have no need of her fear.

IT IS DOUBTLESS ill asserted to say, That Timorousness restrains more Women than Vertue: If their inclination were bad, would they want to be solicited? Experience shews sufficiently, that if they have any apprehension, it is rather of being Vicious, than of being blamed. Tho the Men that have written Books and Proverbs, have writ all things to their own advantage: Yet they have declar'd that Chastity does particularly belong to the Women; for as much as they, who have lost this, are taken for Monsters. It would not be thought so strange if this Quality were not natural to them. There have indeed some Men been found that have possess'd this Vertue; but this has been upon such occasions, as wherein some Considerations, or Constraint have taken away all the merit of it. *Alexander* testified some reservedness with the Women of *Darius's* Family: But to shew that this was more out of Policy than Vertue, what did he not do with the *Amazons*?

Scipio, while he was yet a Young Man, sent back a very fair Woman to her Husband,

band, after his Souldiers had presented her to him : But Glory was stronger in him than Love ; because he had lost his Credit with the *Spaniards* if he had accepted that Offer. What praise did *Xenocrates* deserve for not meddling with the Woman whom they brought to him ? His coldness proceeded from his Old Age ; he was Drunk, he wanted to Sleep. And if he had not been either Feeble or Drowsie, yet it was in publick ; in which case the most Debauched had been asham'd as well as a Philosopher. There is no need of a long Discourse to prove that Chastity does not belong to Men ; they themselves too freely renounce any part in it, and believe that they should encroach upon the profession of the Women, if they should put in practice the Precepts which they themselves give to them.

Is not this a Custom altogether worthy of blame, to see the Men take all manner of Liberty, without being willing to give the least degree ? One would say when one beholds this Tyranny, that Marriage sure was instituted for nothing else but to put Women under the Custody of Goalers. There is herein a great deal of Ingratitude as well as of Injustice, to make claim to a Fidelity which they will not return, especially when they themselves are no less obliged to preserve it. The Women have enough of Wit and of Conscience, to believe that a Revenge

would cost them too dear, if they should lose their own Vertue to have satisfaction for the Vice of their Husbands. *Octavia* did not cease to love the Lewd *Mark Antony*, even while he made Love to *Cleopatra*; and abandon'd a great Beauty at *Rome* to possess one that was far a lesser one in *Egypt*. Those Women that have this Constancy, are worthy of Admiration; but those that have it not, find pretexts for their weakness: The Example serves them for a Reason, and they cannot imagine that Crystal can resist those Bodies, which are able to break Marbles or Diamonds.

IF WE MAY be permitted to give some advice after we have been commending: Since the Son of God himself had a more tender affection for one of his Disciples, than for any of the other. There may be particular inclinations allow'd without any offence to Chastity, which does not banish the Affections, but only regulate and moderate them. However, we ought to take care that if Friendship, in its own nature, be a Vertue, it does not become a Vice in our practice. That it may not be therein abused, we ought to examin the end and design of it as soon as it commences; and to assure our selves it is dangerous if we pretend to any thing else but Affection.

And

And above all, to preserve the more assuredly this Vertue, it is good for them to betake themselves always to some commendable Exercise. Evil Thoughts have no less advantage of an idle Spirit, than Enemies have over a man when he is asleep : And I am of the same opinion with him who call'd this languishing Repose, the burying of a person alive : Because that as Worms breed in the Body when 'tis without the Soul ; so bad Desires and Passions form themselves in a Soul that is without employ. And if dishonest Loves are the trade of those who do not spend their time in something that is commendable ; It ought to be believed, that Chastity will be preserv'd by the help of employment, as it is corrupted by Leisure. Her whom the Ancients held for the Goddess of Love, they also took for the Mother of Idleness : *Diana* follow'd the Chace, and *Minerva* Studied ; but *Venus* did nothing.

H 3 of

Of Courage.

IT SEEMS to the Men, that Courage is a Quality that should be peculiarly affixed to their Sex; without their producing any other Title to it than only their own presumption: But he who made so much difficulty to imagine that there was one strong and courageous Woman in the World, he made the Sex a very honourable amends for so great an injury: And tho he was esteemed the Wisest and the Ablest of all Men, he nevertheless lost this high advantage among the Women, and became so shamefully feeble, and was so far conquer'd by them, that they obliged him to sacrifice to Idols. Histories are full of their generous actions, which they have perform'd to preserve their Country, and out of Love to their Husbands, and for the Religion of their Ancestors.

BUT TO SEE whether our Praises are true or false in this matter, it is necessary to examin what is the opinion of the Wise, and what that of the Vulgar concerning the true nature of Courage. There is nothing then more true than this, That as the strength of the Brain appears in walking over the highest places without fearing a fall; that of Good Spirits consists in the seeing

seeing a danger without being troubled at it. And nevertheless the Stupid have no advantage in this matter, while they wait till occasions come without concern, nor have the rash any that seek them: It is only the Wise that defend themselves from misfortunes, without being precipitant or insensible. Since Courage ought always to be join'd with a free deliberation, and that it is not a Vertue, either wholly constrain'd or purely natural; I cannot persuade my self to account those to be generous who have a Temper so light that it is rais'd without good Cause, nor those that have a Nature so heavy and dull, that one cannot provoke them, tho by ill treatment and injury. Here is either an excess, or a defect of resentment, which may better be term'd Levity or Stupidity, than Courage. If Judgment should be found in all the Discourses of an Orator, Prudence ought to be met with in all the Actions of a Wise Man: Without that let *Polyphemus* be as strong as he will, he shall not fail to lose first his Eye, and then his Life. And tho *Ulysses* was much weaker than he, yet the bulky Giant could not defend himself from him with all the force that he had in his Arms.

AFTER WE have seen wherein the true Courage does consist, those that know the temper of Women, must allow that they have a great disposition to this Vertue:

For they are not so cold as to be unsensible, nor so hot as to be rash. We do not see that the most Couragious among the Men do precipitate themselves upon all sorts of occasions, as if they had as many Lives as there are Hazards and Misfortunes in the World. Whatever good Face they may put upon it, the most understanding persons have some difficulty to resolve upon a thing that depends upon Opinion, and have regret at the committing such a fault, in the loss of Life, as can never be repair'd. This would tell us, that this Vertue ought to have Eyes as well as Arms, and Prudence as well as Vigour. And therefore they who know Morality well, will never give the name of Courage to Anger, nor to Despair; and I am not able to believe, that the Men have Reason, when they call the Women Timerous, only because they are not Hasty or Imprudent.

But if any say that I have made an Apology for Cowardise, they must not take it ill, if I accuse them of recommending Brutality. What glory has a man by cutting his own Throat? And what advantage, bating the brutish custom, in making Ostentation of a Trade, where the Barbarous *Goths* and *Vandals* have been the Masters, and of which they gave us the cruel Rules and Examples? What is there more easie, than for a man to let himself be transported into Fury, and to follow

follow the Motions of his Passion? Those whom the Vulgar call Courageous, resemble the Glasses which we cannot touch almost without breaking them. They do not know that the Minds of Men as well as their Bodies, are always there most sensible where they are most weak. For if this be brave and generous to be provok't, or to complain every Moment, then the sick are more so than the sound, the Old than the Young, and the Vulgar than the Wise. Since Fear and boldness are both reasonable, they are not contrary to each other; The one opens our Eyes to discover Evils before they arrive; and the other animates us to repulse them when they are present.

BUT LET US leave off reasoning, to come to Examples; and in truth we have admirable ones of this kind. Has not *Titus Livius* left us a History much to their Advantage, which he writ, as himself confesses, with Astonishment and Love? After that *Philip* King of *Macedon* had put to Death the Principal Lords of *Thessaly*, many to avoid his Cruelty, fled, and betook themselves into other Countries. *Peris* and *Theoxene* took their way to *Athens*, to find that security there, which they could not have in their own Country. But they Sail'd so unluckily, that instead of advancing, the Winds drove them back again into that
very

very Port whence they had set Sail: The Guards having discover'd them at the rising of the Sun, advertised the Prince of it, and laboured to deprive these unhappy Creatures of that Liberty which they had more in Esteem than their Lives. In this Extremity *Paris* employ'd his intreaties to appease the Souldiers, and even to invoke the Gods to his succour: But *Theoxene* seeing inevitable Death was approaching, and not being willing to fall into the Hands of this Tyrant, she sav'd her Children from Captivity by an Extraordinary Resolution. She presented a Ponyard to the Elder of them, and a Cup of Poison to the Lesser, and thus bespoke them: "There is now no further
 "help either for our Liberty or our Lives;
 "and since we must expect and propose to
 "our selves that we shall die, let us take
 "Courage, my Dear Children; it is better
 "for us to chuse a Death than to receive
 "one from the Hands of those that will
 "insult over us. Those that are strong,
 "let them make use of the Sword; those
 "that are more weak, let them drink off
 "this Draught. Her children obey'd their Mother, she threw them half Dead into the Sea, and then embraced her Dear *Paris* to cast him Headlong with her self after them; this she did in the sight of the Souldiers, who could not forbear to lament the Loss, and to admire the Resolution of this

this Lady. Must we not own that Courage and Constancy appear'd on this Occasion with a marvelous Luster? Can we find among Men any thing more great, or even comparable to this?

Without dissembling I must declare, that I think we cannot see an Action more Courageous: The Despair of her Husband, the Tears of her Children, the Threats of her Enemies could not shake her Constancy: And in the sight of so many misfortunes, she shew'd an Aspect as free from Fear as it was from Pity; she had none but generous Sentiments, there where many Men would have had none but Cowardly ones.

But if the Courage of *Theoxene* did thus appear in the defence of her own Liberty; That of *Megistone* for the sake of her Country, was yet more remarkable. After that *Aristotimus* had usurped the Sovereignty of *Eli*, he drove away the better part of the Citizens, who entreated him that at least he would permit their Wives to bear them company in their Misfortunes. This Tyrant consented, in appearance, to their Demands; but so soon as he perceiv'd and knew that the Women disposed themselves to depart, and that they prefer'd the company of their Husbands to all the Conveniences of their habitations in their City, he put to death a great many of them upon the place, and commanded the rest into

into Prisons. Nevertheless, for as much as Tyranny does no less harm to those that exercise, it than it does to those that suffer under it, and there cannot be much Safety where there are as many Enemies as Subjects; *Aristotimus* begun from thenceforth to fear his own fall: News was brought him that the Banisht Citizens had form'd a Body, and were coming back to lay siege to *Eliis*. This desperate Barbarian not being able to find a more ready remedy for his danger, went with a mighty fury to the Prison, to command the Women that they should call to their Husbands in order to appease them. *Megistone* disdain'd his Commands, and without fearing any effects of his unjust power over them, she made this Answer in the name of the rest. "You shew very
 "sufficiently that you are as destitute of
 "Judgment as you are of Courage, when
 "you come to pray to those Persons whom
 "you have basely abused, and hope for
 "Favour from those to whom you have
 "shew'd none. These places horrible for
 "their Darknes, and the Threatnings
 "of Death that you come with, are not
 "able to render us so Cowardly as to be-
 "tray our Country; for which we will
 "steadily lose our Lives after the loss of
 "our Liberty. *Aristotimus* his rage was more inflam'd rather than diminish'd: He commanded that they should bring the Son
 of

of *Megistone*, and put him to Death before the Face of his Mother: But when he could not be distinguisht by the Messengers, in the Company of other Children, *Megistone* call'd him by name, with a protestation that she had rather see him die than be Captive in the Hands of *Aristotimus*. During this disorder the Tragedy was at an end; He was besieged from without, they conspired against him within the City, where he was murdered in the Market-place. *Megistone* left the Prison, and to shew her self as compassionate as she had been generous and brave, she prevented the Violating the Daughters of *Aristotimus*, remonstrating to the People who mutined against her, that they ought not to render themselves guilty of the Crime that they punisht, nor commit Cruelty upon the Children when they executed Justice upon the Father.

Euripides admired the Countenance, the Discourse, the Resolution of *Iphigenia*, when she was to be Sacrificed to *Diana* for the Hind that *Agamemnon* had kill'd. Why
 " weep you thus (said she to her Father)
 " for her who dies contented, since 'tis
 " by the Command of the Oracle, and for
 " the Good of *Greece*? If the prosperity
 " of your Arms is fastned to the Loss of
 " my Life, I accuse not my Destiny; I regret
 " nothing but this, that I have not
 " more

" more Lives than one, that I might pur-
 " chase for you, by the Loss of them, as
 " many Lawrels as I desire you. At least
 " your Victory shall be as pleasant as your
 " Sacrifice is, that must be the Price and
 " the Omen of it. This young Beauty in
 the midst of the publick Tears, died
 with as much Sweetness as Constancy, and
 made no more resistance to the Sacrificer
 than a Rose does to him that gathers it.

BOTH HISTORIES and Fables
 are full of such Examples. But, to say
 that which seems to me of greatest Impor-
 tance concerning the Use of this Vertue;
 It is necessary to be consider'd well on
 what occasions any serve themselves of it.
 It is here that the Vulgar have great need
 of a Guide, because if they separate Pru-
 dence from humane Actions, then Igno-
 rance, Despair or Rashness will have even
 the same effects and the same appearances
 as Courage.

To speak rightly of this matter, this is
 an Infallible Rule, That those Women who
 testify a great Resolution in any evil De-
 sign, they are in a manner always Cow-
 ardly in any Vertuous Enterprize. And
 for this Reason the Ladies ought to take
 great care, that they be not more bold for
 their Passions than for Vertue. And in
 truth I can by no means approve of them,
 who resemble *Thetia* the *Corinthian*, who had
 so

Of Courage.

111

so great a fear of Flies, that she would never endure any light in her Chamber, lest she should thereby see them; and yet had Resolution enough to kill her own Husband. Was not this to abuse both Fear and Boldness? To be afraid of Flies, and yet commit a horrid Murder with so much Confidence?

And to give a touch at the Principal Vices which are contrary to this Vertue. Those Women that kill themselves, are not courageous, but desperate; this is to give way, instead of defending our selves: It is to yield our selves to an Enemy, without putting him to the trouble to conquer us. There is no great need of Resolution to lay hold on Death for a remedy to it self: There is no great strength of Spirit to practise upon our selves the Office of an Hangman. It is better to seek the end of a Disease in good Medicaments than in Poison; otherwise this is not a resistance, but a flight; this is not to seek a remedy, but to render our ruin the more Infallible. As we count the Body weak, when it sinks under a small Burden; so we ought to believe the Mind cowardly when it faints under an Affliction.

It is indeed upon this ground that many accuse the Women: But the Men have no Reason to Reproach them for a Vice which themselves are often guilty of. As *Lucretia* kill'd

kill'd her self for the Loss of her Honour; *Cato* did the same thing for the Loss of Liberty. And why should they blame a young Lady for that which many have so highly commended in a Philosopher? And to say the truth, though some have set themselves to invent Slanders for the disparagement of the Women; it ought to be own'd that they are more firm to their designs than the Men. At least, let us learn from the Holy Scripture, that upon an occasion which required the greatest Affection and Courage towards the Service of God; One might have seen three *Mary's* under the Cross, where there was but one of Twelve Disciples.

Of Constancy and Fidelity.

THOSE THAT HAVE been possessed with a belief, that Levity is natural to Woman; when they read this Discourse which undertakes to prove the contrary, they will perhaps think that we pretend to find Stability in the Winds, a good foundation upon the Waters, or strength in Reeds. But setting aside their Opinion, since it is not our Design or Commission, to rectify all those who are in an Errour, we will make it appear that as to what concerns

concerns Inconstancy, that Sex are more in danger to be injur'd by it, than to be guilty of it. And that their distrust is very just in an Age when the Friendships that are promised with a great deal of Ceremony, are without Truth, or but of a Moments Duration. Constancy is not used but in good things, and Obstinacy in those that are evil; otherwise Wickedness would be Eternal, and Repentance should be forbid for fear of a change. When an alteration is just it is a matter of Choice; when 'tis not so it proceeds from Levity. As it is not reasonable that they who are sick should remain always in that condition that they might not be inconstant; so likewise I do not think there is any more fault in forsaking an ill Opinion, than in getting rid of a Fever: And I believe that to Repent may be as necessary to the Mind, as Medicines are sometimes to the Body. What danger is there in preferring a greater merit to a less, or to own that the Sun has more of light than the Stars? Otherwise the first things that we shall happen to see in the World would put a Shackle upon our Liberty, even to the taking away from us the right of Chusing, or to the making us love that which may be worthy of Hatred.

Those that highly esteem'd Nero while he manag'd himself wisely in the first five years of his Empire; Were they oblig'd

for this to love and Honour him also when he was become a Tyrant? After he had cashier'd all his Vertue, must they still owe him Friendship? I did love this Man for his Merit, this Face for its beauty, this Flower for its Colour; this Man is debauch'd and become vicious, this unhappy Face is grown ugly, this fine Flower Alas, is wither'd; why would you have me to be still fond of an object where the lovely Qualities are no more to be found? And can the Building stand when the Foundation is taken away? If this be a due preserving of these Melancholy Laws of Constancy, They who love a curious Picture would be oblig'd to admire the Cloth too, after that the fine Draught were defaced. There is no Religion in that Love which obliges to pay an Honour to such Relicks, any more than as our Affection may be changed into Pity with the decay of the Object, or unless it were to avoid Ingratitude rather than Inconstancy. It is for this reason that they who love nothing but the Beauty of the Body, have a great deal of difficulty to live long in Love: It is only the Beauty of the Mind and the never fading Charms of Vertue that can lay hold of us for ever. Faces, as well as the Years, have their Seasons: How agreeable and lovely soever a Spring may be, we must expect to see the Flowers wither'd

wither'd away, and to endure a Winter after the fine days.

NEVERTHELESS there is no ground to condemn so noble a Vertue, and a quality so necessary to the World, as Constancy; without which all the Love in it were but Treachery and Deceit. Let it then be taken how it will, whether as Men are wont to do, or according to reason, I say the following Examples will shew that the Men are very injurious when they give the Names of Vices to the Vertues of the Women; when they will needs call them obstinate or fickle tho they have reason to change or not to change. *Sinorix* being deeply in Love with *Camina* the Wife of *Synatus*, he employed all his Arts to win her consent to his Passion: But when all his endeavours, together with the Luster of his Quality, were not of force sufficient to shake the Resolution of this Woman, he imagin'd that if her Husband were but taken out of the World, he should then easily possess what was now refused him: He kill'd him; and after that Cruelty, he so importun'd the Parents of this Widow, that by their influence she at last consented, in appearance, to the Marriage of *Sinorix*. When they were come then to Celebrate the Marriage, and that they must go to the Temple of *Diana*, This Chast Lady brings out a Cup of Wine, of which she drinks

a good part to *Sinorix*, and gives him the rest; he received it joyfully, and drank it all, not imagining in the least that it was poisoned. *Camma* seeing her design now accomplisht, she threw her self upon her Knees before the Image of *Diana*, to whom she gave her thanks and made her excuses “ after this manner. Great Goddes, thou
 “ knowst with how great a Constraint,
 “ and with what Design I have consented
 “ to marry with this Murderer. If Grief
 “ would kill as often as it is extream, I
 “ should not have been now in this World;
 “ where nevertheless I have not refused to
 “ stay a while, that I might take vengeance
 “ on this perfidious Man, whom thou seest
 “ here, who believes that I am able to love
 “ him after he has raviisht from me my
 “ Dear *Synattus*. Think with thy self *Bar-*
 “ *barous* Man, and acknowledge how much
 “ right I have to Sacrifice thy life to that
 “ thou hast taken from my Husband. I
 “ do not value at all my own, for I de-
 “ fer’d to put an end to it only that I
 “ might give to Posterity one more re-
 “ markable Testimony of my Love and of
 thy Cruelty. *Camma* was happy in this that
Sinorix died before her, tho he drank last
 of the fatal draught: The Gods gave this
 satisfaction to her Fidelity, and she ended
 her life calling still upon *Synattus*, that he
 would come and accompany her in her de-
 parture

parture from this World. Can any of the Men give a more noble Example of Constancy than this? And was it not a Philosophick Madness to maintain in publick, that among a thousand Men one should hardly find one constant, but amongst all Woman-kind not one?

After this it is easy to judge, whether the Prince of Philosophers had reason to compare Woman to the first Matter, because that has always a desire to the changing of its Forms; and tho it has gained one that is altogether perfect, yet it still retains a general inclination for all other. He had a design to shew by the Parallel, that the Women are as unsatisfied and unconstant towards the Men, as Matter is towards the Forms. But this is a Comparison too injurious, and such as would agree better a great deal with the Philosopher himself, than with any the most unconstant Woman that could be found: For he forsook one Mistress for another, to whom he made his devout Addresses, that he might Testifie with the more solemnity that he himself was guilty of a Crime of which he had accused the Women. In truth they have more reason to complain of the Men, than they have to fear their Reproaches. How are credulous Spirits at this day ill requited for their simplicity! Whatever assurances many Men do give, they ought rather to be reckoned Deceivers than

Inconstant; because at the same time that they promise Fidelity, they are forming a Design to violate it: There is no alteration in their Resolutions, but there is in their Words.

THIS VICE does not haunt those Minds that are above the Common Rank: One may be assured of them, and their least designs remain firm in all sorts of occasions, and under the greatest storms of Fortune. Levity comes of Weakness, and Constancy from a strength of Spirit. After that Affection has bound together two Generous Souls, the Separation of them must be impossible: For since Love is in its Nature Immortal, when it can cease to be it must be acknowledged that it is not true. St. *Augustine* said, that his Friend and he seemed to have between them but one Soul both for Life and Love: That Death had not so much Separated two, as divided one. And that after the Loss of this Confident he had a fear of Death and a horror at Life: Because without him he was but half alive, and nevertheless he saw himself oblig'd to preserve the rest, that his Friend might not entirely die. There are but few so constant as this great Person was: The Friendships of these times are no longer so firm. And if we consider well, those between whom the affections they had for each other are ruin'd upon the slightest occasions, we may believe that the Union

is very often without strength, when the Separation is so often made without regret.

AFTER WE have spoken of Inconstancy, we shall encounter Perfidiousness, which is ordinarily inseparably adjoyned to it. And in truth, I am not able to comprehend how it comes to pass that any are Perfidious, when the whole World has so great an abhorrence of this crime, and it does so infallibly procure Enemies: They that make use of it ought to fear it, and they whom it has hurt will seek to be revenged on it. But that which is worthy of astonishment is this, That the very Aspect of such Persons testifies that while they set the whole World against them, they are not in a very good agreement with themselves; thus declaring without words, the horror which themselves are filled with at their own wickedness. It is not necessary to be very well skill'd in the Rules of Physiognomy, to observe upon their Faces the wickedness and the torment of their Minds. It must needs be that these are the greatest Criminals in the World, since they themselves form their own Process in their own Consciences, and that even to the executing it too upon themselves sometimes with their own Hands. The forlorn Wretches practise a new form of Justice upon themselves, where they alone are Judges and Executioners, Accusers and

Guilty. Altho naturally we love our selves, yet such can shew themselves no Mercy, and they shew by those their fatal Looks, that none can absolve them while their own severe Consciences do condemn and torment them. This is the most horrible and the least excusable of all Crimes, because those that attempt this, are at the cost of so much trouble to commit it, and they must do so much harm to themselves to do it to others. Faithfulness on the contrary is always chearful even among difficulties; and Perfidiousness is always musing and melancholy even in the midst of Divertisements. A Mind that is faithful does not resent its Afflictions; but that which is treacherous has no tast of its Pleasures; Their Sentiments are very differently taken up; for the Vice makes the one sort weep even among Delights, and the Vertue helps the other sort to laugh even among their Evils and their sufferings. When a Soul is sullied with this Vice, it is capable of all the wickedness that can be imagin'd, and especially does Avarice follow it very near. And when once a Woman is become Covetous, she has a great deal of difficulty to be faithful; there is nothing that she will not do and that she will not sell to be rich. This is the most infallible mark of a clownish Spirit and of a Soul debauched. The Ladies ought never to testifie that they have any inclination to this, lest they fall under the Fate of *Procris*;

etis, who after she had resisted both threatenings and submissions, yet she yielded as soon as she saw the Money told down.

BUT THAT WE MAY see this Vice in all its Aspects; The Credulous and the Ignorant are no less in danger of falling into this than any other: They are persuaded to many things, which their Easiness afterwards makes them suffer contrary to their Honour. It seems, to say the truth, that these Women are neither Faithful nor Perfidious; for they have not the Design that should make them Perfidious, nor yet Strength enough to be faithful. It is this simplicity, as the Poet speaks, which is worthy of excuse, provided that one does not take pleasure in being deceiv'd. The Politick are liable to do by Wickednesses that which the Simple do by Misfortune. Subtilty often times makes Snares in which its self is entangled. There are evils where flight is better than resistance, and the good Swimmers are the most frequently drowned, because their skill tempts them to cast themselves into the stream, from which they are not able to disengage themselves again.

THERE IS NO NEED of proofs to shew that the Women are much less and not so frequently perfidious as the Men; We have but too many Examples of this, and Experience alone does sufficiently discover that they have more need to defend them-

themselves from the perfidiousness of the Men, than to correct their own. Do we not see among the Heathen Ladies, that the Generous *Paulina* caused her own Veins to be cut, when she saw her Husband *Seneca* condemned to that punishment by *Nero*? refusing to live after the death of him that had taught her to love as a Philosopher, that is, constantly. They clos'd and stop't her Veins against her Will; but she always testifi'd from that time, by the pale colour and discontent of her looks, that this cure was altogether troublesom: And that she remain'd in the world with regret, since she could see no longer here the Man, of whom she had learnt to despise both Life and Death, to testifie the constancy of Love. The Wife of *Mithridates*, seeing the affairs of her Husband growing desperate, she took the Garland that was about her Head, and twisted it about her Neck, to strangle her self therewith: But when it broke with the first attempt, she took the remaining piece in her Hand, and fell into the most passionate complaints, for that such things could only serve to be the Ornaments of a good Fortune, but were not able to afford any relief in a bad one.

And to shew a most admirable effect of their Constancy, among the Women that have embraced the Christian Religion, in the most noble occasion of Courage that could ever be presented; Do we not see a Penitent Woman

Woman perfectly resolv'd to attend her Master through all hazards, even at the time when his Disciples forsook him, tho they had all made, too, a thousand protestations that they would never abandon him?

Of Prudence and Discretion.

THE LADIES ARE but humane in their Beauty; but they are, as it were Divine if they are Prudent: When their Beauty procures them Love, Prudence renders them worthy of admiration and respect. This is the Vertue that is most necessary to them, and which gives them the greatest Authority: Since without this all their other fine qualities are without Ornament, or at least without Order, like the scattered Flowers which the Wind carries confusedly about. With this the most Vicious preserve a little while their Reputation, (if it be fit to call their Cunning by the name of Prudence) and without this, very often, the Vertuous lose theirs. For this cause it is very necessary to the Ladies to direct them in what they do, and in what they let alone. And as the Architects have always a pair of Compasses in their hand to measure every inch of their Works; so she that will be Wise, ought to have every moment the Rules of Prudence

before her Eyes, that she may render all her actions the more reasonable. But if we should go about to speak all the good effects of Prudence, we must recount all the good that there is in Morality or in Politicks: As the Poets feign'd, that the fire of *Prometheus* was divided into many parcels for the animating of several Creatures; so we may say when we consider this Divine Vertue, which regulates all others, and which is necessary even to the least designs, That whatever it is we call either an Art or a Science, it is nothing else, in truth, but a fragment of Prudence.

THE SLANDERERS accuse the Ladies, that they have no Address but where they have a Passion; that they have no Subtlety but for very small or very evil Enterprises: That like the Spiders, all their Art is Impoysoned; and that they spread their Nets but for the catching of Flies. But this is an Imposture more worthy of a Punishment than an Answer: It is also a Tyranny and a Custom that is not less unjust than it is old, to reject them from the Publick Government, as if their Minds were not capable of Affairs of Importance, as well as those of Men. "The Honour of her Sex, who now deserves and possesses the Partnership of a Throne, is alone a sufficient confutation of this Calumny; whose admirable Conduct we have lately seen, worthy, not only of the Thanks, but of the Imitation of a Senate. And the Examples fol-

following shall further testify, that the Praises we give them are not without foundation; and that we have reason to assert, that they have often produced remedies for the most desperate and sinking conditions of Estates and Provinces.

When the *Latins* demanded liberty of intermarriages with the *Romans*, with Arms in their Hands to take vengeance on the refusal; The Senate found themselves mightily at a loss what Answer to give them; for they saw that to refuse would bring upon them a certain War; and they knew that to consent would bring their Estates in danger, for as much as this Alliance was but a pretext in the *Latins* for the making themselves Masters of *Rome*. *Tutola*, a very young Maid, presented her self to give them her Advice; and having observ'd a great irresolution and uncertainty what to do in the Discourses of so many Old Senators, she no sooner proposed her Counsel, but it was approv'd by them all. She shew'd them they must agree with these Strangers in what they demanded, and cause the Servant-maids to be drest in the Habit of Brides: That so the *Sabines* being amused with the pleasure of those Guests, might be diverted from the design they had of making a War.

This succeeded according to her Opinion; and these Slaves when they saw their pretended Husbands fallen fast asleep, they stole from

from them their Arms, and gave notice to the *Roman* Souldiers by a lighted Torch, that they might come and surprize their Enemies when they were unable to defend themselves. We cannot sufficiently praise the Courage, the Conduct, and the Affection of *Tullia*, who found means for the safety of the Common-wealth, when the Wise Senators were at uncertainty what course they should take.

Let what will be said of the Imprudence of the Women; If the Men would sometimes take their Advice; as God has given them for a help in the management of their Affairs, perhaps they would succeed the more happily: And it would be acknowledg'd that they are mightily in the wrong, who despise them in a matter where there is need of Address, and Prudence.

When *Theseus* was exposed to the *Minotaur* in a Labyrinth, who gave him the means to escape, but *Ariadne*? Without the Clue of Thread which he receiv'd from this Princess, had he ever been disengag'd from its windings? This Labyrinth is a resemblance of Occasions or Affairs that are difficult; *Theseus* represents a man entangled; the Thread is Prudence, and *Ariadne* that gave him it, represents to us those Judicious Ladies, that often withdraw their Husbands from those extremities, out of which they were not able to help themselves. When *Jason* was to have become a Prey to those furious Bulls that

that guarded the Golden Fleece, was it not *Medea* that enchanted them, and made an easie way for this Prince to carry off that which no man before durst attempt? By these Bulls we are to understand those dangers that often hinder the getting possession of excellent things; by the Fleece, is meant the designs of men, and what they pretend to; by *Admetus* the Women of Wit and Spirit, who know to charm these dangers, without making use of any other Magick for this purpose, but only that of their Prudence and Conduct; to the end they may deliver those that resemble *Jason*, that is to say, such as have more Boldness to undertake Business, than Address and Skill to succeed in it.

The Ladies are not only capable to know what is of Importance in Business or Traffick; but even to apprehend whatever is most Subtile or Solid in the Highest Wisdom. If the Oracle of *Apollo* declar'd *Socrates* the wisest among men; *Socrates* himself afterwards freely confest, that his *Diotima* had taught him that Prudence which the Gods themselves had thus judg'd Incomparable. It is not a little to the Advantage of that Woman to have instructed a Philosopher, whose life was so full of Vertue, and whose Morality agrees better with Christianity than any other. And we cannot see more to this purpose, either in Histories or Fables, than experience daily shews to them who are willing to judge without Passion.

BUT

BUT IT IS NOT enough to prove that they are capable of this Vertue ; it is more Important to them to know the means to preserve it. After we have seen how natural it is to them, we must shew also how necessary it is too. After we have shewn the excellency of it, it will be good to examine its Use and Effects. There is nothing then more true than this ; That Prudence and Fear are, in a manner, always inseparable : And that as Rashness often puts the most able persons into great danger, so Distrust sets the weakest in safety.

The *Pallas* of the Poets, who ought to be an example of Wisdom to the Women, was always armed, to shew those of her Sex that it would be best for them to be every moment upon their Guard : And that because they have so many Enemies, they have always need to defend themselves. The Women have no less cause to tremble, like those that are covetous, even at the shadow of a Reed, that is, for a very little matter : Since they carry a Treasure that is very easie to be lost, and very worthy to be preserv'd. And certainly, how deserving foever they may be, she that is without Fear is as a Town without a Wall, as easie to be taken as it is difficult to be kept. I do not here speak of the fear of those that are distracted, which is a much greater evil than any which that threatens them with : But I speak of that wise Fear which pro-

posed

poses Misfortunes to us without hurting the temperament of the Body, or the repose of the Conscience.

I do not at all design that Prudence should put us always in a fright; There is a certain Path between Fear and Temerity, which this Vertue shews, that we may prevent or avoid the Misfortunes that are impending. And in truth there are some that are too credulous or too distrustful; there needs but a meer Phantome to fright them; they fear as imperitously as they hope: We may see their weakness no less in the credit they give to Good, than in that they give to Evil: And these both proceed from the same Error; which is, that they know not how to examine well either the one or the other. Since Prudence shews the point of Mediocrity for other Vertues, so it ought to shew in this what is the Excess or the Defect: But, not to dissemble, it seems to me, that Distrust is more often join'd with Wisdom than Credulity; and that if the former is not more Reasonable, yet at least 'tis more Safe.

This Vertue appears no less in the chusing of Good, than in the fear of Evil. And altho we see nothing more common at this day than bad Elections, whether of Friendships or Fortune: Prudence is that which repairs this Defect, as it is particularly employ'd to deliberate and to chuse. Without doubt a great many have need of this Ver-

tue ; and they ought not to wonder if Repentance follows their Affections, when Knowledge and Choice did not precede them. When this is wanting to them, these Affections of theirs are meerly Brutal, their Conversations are Dangerous, and their Confidences very Ill Assured.

In this, as in every other occasion where a good Conduct is required, there is a certain Consideration which must examine all the Circumstances of a Design: And if Prudence is the Eye of the Soul, this discretion or discerning of things is as the Apple of that Eye ; this is the Flower of that Plant, the Point of that Arrow.

BUT TO EXAMINE one of the Principal Effects of this Vertue: Commonly those Women that would seem to be Wise, are not so at all. The best Wits ought to conceal the secret Springs of their Conduct, lest people should be cautious of confiding in them, and lest they rather defend themselves against, than rely upon them. This is a Treasure that we may enjoy and use as long as we hide it ; like the Sepulchral Lamps of the Ancient *Romans*, which would give light a long time if they remained under the Earth, but go out of themselves as soon as they come to the Air. This great Ostentation is usually join'd with Levity of Mind: And those Women that boast of so much Sufficiency, very often have little of it. They
re-

resemble those Apes, who are never more truly and remarkably Beasts, than when they are disguised under the Habits of Men. What Reason had the Holy Scripture to require the joyning of the Wisdom of the Serpent with the Simplicity of the Dove ! That the former might be without Poison, the latter without Folly ; that the one might not deceive, nor the other be deceiv'd. In truth, these are two Companions that ought always to be inseparable, since the one of them mightily recommends the other : And because Prudence may take the Charms of Simplicity, to render it self the more Amiable, and Simplicity may use the Conduct of Prudence to render it self the more assured. And to speak rightly ; If Address without Honesty is nothing else but Wickedness ; Simplicity also without Prudence is nothing else but Folly.

Of the Learned Women.

I AM NOT ABLE to refrain from laughing, when I think of the Error of *Francis Duke of Britain*, who testified an extraordinary Passion for *Isabella*, the Daughter of *Scotland*, when he understood that she was an utter Stranger to Study ; persuading himself that a Woman had Learning enough when she could put a difference be-

tween the Shirt and the Doublet of her Husband. The Opinion of this Prince would be very ridiculous in those Countries where People go Naked, or as well among those Nations who make the Shirt and the Doublet all of a piece: The Esteem which he had of the Ignorant and Simple, does oblige me to believe he might have made a Vow that he would love none but those that were like himself.

The Emperor *Theodosius* made not so great account of the Ignorant; He married *Athenais* only because she was Learned, and of a good Wit, without any regard to this, that she was Daughter to a Father of but mean Extraction, who left her no other Dowry but the Beauty she was born with, and the Philosophy of his School. They that will distrust a Woman when she knows a little more than ordinary, are certainly such weak people as deserve to fall under what they fear, and who found their Suspicions upon the very Reasons themselves which ought to give them Assurance.

Moreover, the Ladies that have some Knowledge and Learning, do of all others afford the greatest pleasure in Conversation; and they receive no less in solitude when they entertain themselves alone. Their Thoughts have wherewithal to content them, while the Ignorant are subject to Evil Thoughts, because they know nothing commendable

commendable to employ their minds about: As their Conversation is tedious, so their Musing can be but extravagant. They that say the Women have a great advantage in their Ignorance, do they not give too much honour to the untaught simplicity of the Village, which is commonly much in danger when it meets with Importunity and Occasion? Or if this Sentiment be good, why may we not say as well, that the Blind are great gainers in the loss of their Eyes, if it were enough to shut the Eyes for the avoiding of a Precipice? In the Court, as in the Ocean, it is necessary to know the Shelves if we would avoid the making Shipwreck; and if the Ladies do that which is evil, after they know it to be so, we ought to place the Cause of their Misfortune in their Design, not in their Knowledge.

And nevertheless I will maintain, as Reason does oblige me, That a Lady ought to be Learned, that she may make a figure in Conversation. It may be that this Sentiment will at first sight offend that of the Ignorant and Stupid, who persuade themselves, that they should find their own dear resemblance every where; that a Woman cannot study nor read without becoming Vicious, or at least without being suspected. But they that judge so rashly in this case, do despise that which they ought to desire, as if they were oblig'd to hate all the accomplish-

ment which they have not themselves, or as if they ought not to make account of any but very little Spirits: Whereas they ought to represent to themselves, that those Women who have not Judgment enough to know Vice, they have not enough neither for the choice of Vertue; or to know how, according to the Occasions, they should prefer Truth to an appearance. Also they who understand ever so little of Morality, cannot be for this Advice, since we are daily taught by experience to acknowledge, that the light of our Reason is, as it were, a natural Vertue which disposes to do good, almost without any Study; and that we really see a very good Wit without a good Conscience. The assistance of Learning fortifies the good Inclinations, and they that persuade themselves the reading of Books is only a School to teach them to commit Evil with Address, might more decently believe that the Ladies may find there more to correct than to corrupt them.

Reading and Conversation are absolutely necessary to render the Wit and the Humour agreeable; and as the one collects for us matter for Discourse, the other by use teaches the method of unfolding it gracefully, that we may join together Readiness and Abundance; without this, our Conversation is nothing else but an insupportable Tyranny; and it is impossible without putting ones
self

self upon a Rack, to stay long with these Women, who can entertain us with nothing but the number of their Sheep, if they be of the Country; or if they be of the Town, then can talk of nothing but the Heads and Petticoats in fashion. It ought not then to be imagin'd, that in speaking of this accomplished Woman, whose Character we are framing, we do intend to describe a Mother of a Family that knows well how to follow her Servants, or takes care to comb her Children. Tho we do not condemn these things, yet we must declare that skill in Musick, History and Philosophy, and the like accomplishments, are more agreeable to our design than meer good Houswifry. And there can be none so much Strangers to Common-Sense, as not to own that without these good Attainments, tho the Women may have an excellent Wit, yet they will be apt to have their minds fill'd with things very Evil and very Impertinent. Their good Nature and their good Inclination remain without effect under the want of Reading and Conversation, when the Tyranny of their Mothers or of their Husbands, or else some other misfortune hinders them from attaining those excellent qualities which they are born capable of.

FOR TO SAY that the Sciences are too obscure for the Ladies, and that they cannot comprehend the Arts, even in their

Principles, because of the Terms that are too hard to be understood: This in truth is a very strange Error. It is an opinion altogether extravagant to think that the Sciences cannot as well be exprest in English as in Greek or Latin. These Disputers that through Ignorance or Malice, have obscur'd the Arts under Terms that are rude, as under ragged Cloaths, and who will not unravel the Confusion that we may still have recourse to them as to an Oracle; They do them no less wrong in forcing them to appear in an Apparel so shameful, than the Libertins do to Vertue, when they describe it as terrible and inaccessible, that they may deter others from venturing upon it. But the Worthy Persons know how to take away this Mask. It is an Imposture that gives no trouble but to the Spirits of the Vulgar. I easily allow, that as for Philosophy and Theology, one may find in them some words that seem not to be purely English: I grant that when other Arts have their peculiar Terms which are not usually softned and explained, to be accommodated to them who do not make profession of those Arts, it is not reasonable that two of the noblest Sciences in the World should make themselves more familiar than the others. I own too that in strong reasoning there are sometimes words used which are a little mysterious, because they express
the

the truth somewhat better than those that are more Polite. But after all, where there is not this necessity, what need have we to affect Obscurity in our Discourses and Writings? As if Clearness would render the Sciences less venerable; or as if the Darkness serv'd them for Ornament and Luster; as if the Force and the Dignity of reasoning were necessarily tackt to the Rudeness of Terms. On the contrary, we no more diminish their price in taking away the Veil that conceals them, than it lessens the value of Gold to dig it out of the Entrails of the Earth, to refine it, and make it serviceable to Commerce. I judge that they who clearly explain the Sciences, do discover to us true Treasures, and that they merit some part of the Glory of *Socrates*, who brought Wisdom down from Heaven to Earth; that is, he render'd it easy to be understood by those minds which seem'd to be the most uncapable of it. There is then nothing more true than that when the Sciences are well and rightly conceiv'd and understood, they may also be express'd even in any Language whatever; and the Ladies are then capable to understand them.

ON THE OTHER SIDE, tho some say that all the hindrance lies on the part of their Minds, as not being strong enough for Learning: It seems to me that this is a very wrong Judgment of their Temperament,

perament, which according to the Physicians, being more delicate than ours, it is also more disposed to the study of Arts and Sciences. Whatever can be said, they are capable of these as well as the Men; and if they quit sometimes what they might pretend to, this is more out of Modesty or Consideration than out of Weakness. Do we not see in History that the Ancient Gauls divided with their Women the glory of Peace and of War; that the Men reserv'd the Arms to themselves, but left to the Women the Establishment of Laws and the Preservation of their Republicks? This could not be done out of Ignorance; and it may be judg'd from hence what Esteem they had of the Women, when the Part allotted to the Men was the Exercises of the Body, and they committed to them the matter of Conduct, and the exercises of the Mind.

What Science so difficult can be imagin'd wherein they have not excell'd at least as far as the Men? Was not *Aspasia* judg'd worthy to teach *Pericles*, who yet was able himself to give Instructions to all the World? *Cornelia* the Mother of the *Gracchi* compos'd Letters so excellent, as that her Sons afterwards derived from them all their Eloquence, which was also great; and these Letters of hers did *Cicero* himself admire. *Pamphila* wrote so many as an hundred and three Books of History, which all the Learned

ed Men of that Age highly esteem'd. And as for the Sacred Sciences, Does not St. *Gregory* himself acknowledge that his Sister serv'd him for a Tutouress, and that she gave him the knowledge of the best Learning? But it is not necessary to search the Ages past for Examples of this kind; We have in our own some Instances so extraordinary as may be compar'd with any the greatest in Antiquity: We have Ladies that know how to write upon the most serious and the most difficult Subjects. In truth I cannot chuse but believe, that the most obstinate Persons would yield the cause, if they would only take the Pains to read the Homilies that Madam the Viscountess of *Auchy* has Composed upon St. *Paul*. She has not undertaken those places that are more plain, and where she might most easily have succeeded: She has bestow'd her pains upon the Epistle to the *Hebrews*, which contains, as every own knows, the most secret and the most lofty Mysteries of our Religion. Nevertheless in a matter so Elevated there is nothing can conquer the force of this great Spirit; she marches over Thorns as another would do upon Roses; her Style has nothing forced or affected, it is sweet and pompous both together; and the nicest Persons would admire in this Work, that which one shall rarely find in the same Author; there is
Clearness

Clearness joyn'd with Vigour, and Sharpness with Politeness. There is that will instruct the devout, and satisfy the curious: The learned and the delicate will there find things that do deserve to be consider'd with Attention; and they that persuade themselves a Woman cannot write well, would confess their Errour after the reading of that Book.

What need is there to enumerate a great many more? To mention those amongst us that have excell'd in Poetry, to that degree, as to force Applauses from their Competitors in Fame. This Subject is too large to be follow'd through. And tho the Men have been very sparing and cautious in writing the praises of Women, yet they have not been able wholly to refrain from bringing Testimony to this Truth, and many of their Books have afforded room for their Commendations. And if it may be permitted us for this purpose to appeal to Fable for our assistance, we may learn, that if the Men have an *Apollo* for the Author of the Sciences, the Women have also a *Minerva*, the Goddess of Wisdom, who invented the better Learning, and who gives them a just right to pretend to the same. If I did not fear to support so known a Truth upon Fictions, I should content my self to send them that yet doubt in this, to the Famous Nine Muses of the Poets, to whom
all

all the Ancients ascribed the Invention of Arts.

Of Habits or Ornaments.

IT IS CERTAIN, that in whatsoever Fashion we can possibly cloath our selves, we shall very hardly please all sorts of persons; either the Old or the Young will find in our Habit something or other to find fault with: And it is next to Impossible that we should avoid falling under either the Derision of the one or the Censure of the other. There are some melancholy Spirits that cannot endure we should do any thing according to the Fashion, and who will infallibly find out something unlawful in our Dress, if we cannot prove that it has been a thousand Years invented and used. This is to disdain altogether the present Time, that we may give too much Honour to that which is past: Without considering that we must bear with that which cannot be hinder'd, and that there may often be less Vanity in following the New Modes than in adhering to the Old ones. It is true, that the Foolish invent them; but the Wise may conform too, instead of contradicting them. The Habit, as well as the Words we use, ought to be conform'd to the Time

Time we live in. And as they would take him for a Madman who should talk in the Court the Language used in the time of King *William* the First; so we ought not to think better of them who would cloath themselves as he did. Those who blame, without a distinction, the alteration of our Fashions, would better become themselves in quitting their slavish Sentiments. Who would forbid the seeking our Convenience or Decency, for fear we should not be habited like our Ancestours? Were it not in truth an indecent Confusion to see a Boy in the same Dress with his Grandfather? I would willingly learn of those, who would not have young People (at least) follow the Custom, of what date the Habit should be which they would allow? For if Antiquity alone will serve them for a Rule, we must return back even to our Great-Great Grandfather *Adam*, and cloath our selves with Leaves and Skins, that we may render our Fashion the more venerable by being the more ancient.

They who say that Reason and Custom are like the Sun and the Moon, have not made their Guess altogether amiss; for we must needs make use of the light of these two Stars according to occasion, tho the one be much brighter than the other. Excess is blameable throughout; but especially in Novelty: It is Folly to disdain it, and Vanity to addict
our

our selves too much to it : As I do not approve those Women who seek with too much curiosity after the newest Fashions ; so neither can I much esteem them who have still a regret at those that Custom has a while introduced. This Obstinacy comes from the love of themselves ; and they seem to deserve punishment no less than they who would pass away old Medals for good Mony in Trade, contrary to the Laws of the Prince and the Custom of the Country. They render their Age ridiculous, who run after the new Fashions when they themselves are old, and use a great deal of Ceremony to make Men observe in them the ruins of Time and the defects of Nature. It is true, that the care and the time that Women use in dressing, do make them blameable, when this is extream, or when their intentions are evil : But without this abuse I do not believe that there is more danger in adorning the Face, than in the enchacing of precious Stones, or the polishing of Marble. We lay Azure upon a Cieling, we guild a Sword, we trim our Cloaths, we adorn all things, even to the Churches themselves ; why should we forbid Women their Ornaments when they are honest, and when their designs are not evil, when these are permitted to every thing else ? St. *Jerom* writing to *Gaudentius* concerning the Habit of the Young *Paula*, seems to excuse the Innocent Curiosity of those Women

Women, who adorn themselves according to what becomes their Condition.

“ Their Sex is so curious of Ornament,
 “ and does so naturally desire even a sumptuous Habit, that one may see many even
 “ of the Chastest and most Vertuous Ladies
 “ dress themselves with care, without having any other end or design in it, but
 “ only their own particular contentment,
 “ and out of I know not what complaisance which is altogether innocent. This
 Inclination is so natural to them, that heretofore many Ladies have put their Ornaments in their Coffins, that they might carry with them out of the World, what they have so much lov'd when they were here. Those that do not approve these indifferent things, which only the Intention can render either good or bad, do think they have great advantage against the Women, when they call them the Instruments of the Devil; without considering, that altho those evil Spirits do make use of their Actions or Habits to make them temptations to the vicious and foolish, the Women themselves are in that case no more guilty of the evils they occasion, when their own designs are honest, than the Thunder is guilty when the Spirits of the Air direct it to fall upon Men or upon Churches.

NEVERTHELESS this discourse does not extend it self at all to the justifying

tying of Excess, or the defence of Vice. Let not any think that I would herein excuse Painting. Modesty is a most powerful Charm; without it Beauty has no life nor Soul. And if the other Vertues are worthy of Admiration, yet this only merits Love. The Ornaments that are deceitful and dishonest, do add nothing to Beauty, nor diminish any thing from Deformity; since according to the Sentiment of the Wise and good *Pythagoras*, an homely Woman painted makes Heaven laugh and the Earth mourn. After all, They have nothing but what may be found in the Shops, they glory in a Stolen Feather: Whoever considers them well, sees the daubing, and knows they abuse the Eye, like those Images, whose outside is gilded and fine, but under that they are only Worm-eaten and rotten Wood.

BUT IS IT NOT a thing yet more shameful; To see the Men some of them more addicted to this superfluity than the Women? *Hortensius* the Roman Orator spent one half of the day to consider and adjust himself, instead of Learning his Oration. And without returning back so far, we are in an Age wherein the Men make profession of this blamable Curiosity more than ever. I am certain that if the insupportable Affectation of some Gentlemen

L

were

were well examin'd, they would have the Title of *Aristagoras* put upon them, who took so much pains to make himself pretty, that at last they call'd him Madam. In good truth, they are herein as much estrang'd from the Design as from the Decorum of their Sex; for as much as they are never less agreeable than when they too much force themselves to be so. This great care is odious to all them that observe it, and Negligence were to them much better than all their Ornaments and Affectations, which are things really unworthy of Men.

I find also that the Poet very handsomely observ'd, that *Thesens* was not at all adorn'd when *Ariadne* gave him the first proofs of her Love. There is reason to fear that the Ladies too manly are not so modest as they should be, and the Men that are too spruce are without Courage. The young Cavaliers of the *Romans* in whom *Pompey* placed all his hope, turn'd tail in the *Rbarsalian* Field to keep their Faces from being hurt: They were less afraid to see themselves conquer'd, than a little disfigur'd with a Scar; and to preserve I know not what Imaginary beauty, they abandon'd their Honour, their Liberty, and their Country. And the Ladies may indeed justly apprehend that these delicate Fops are conscious to themselves they

they are no otherways capable of pleasing them.

NEVERTHELESS, to return to that which belongs to our design: *Cesar* having seen his Daughter *Julia Augusta* too well set out, he star'd on her a good while without speaking a word; to testify his discontent with her Dress by his silence: The next day seeing her more modestly cloath'd, he said with a smiling Countenance, this Habit becomes much better the Daughter of *Augustus*. The Repartee of this Princess was not less considerable than the Admonition of the Emperour; Yesterday (said she) I was drest for my Husband, and to day I am drest for my Father.

Certainly as the most wise, will not be at all offended, if the Ladies are constrain'd to please many, that they retain one; so it must be acknowledged, that if they did always adorn themselves only to secure their Husbands, there would not be that Excess that there is; and we should not hear so many complaints as now go abroad, of those whose Luxury brings Poverty and Jealousy into their Families. They often carry three or four Manners hanging at their Ears, and with this specious pretext spare neither Pearls nor Diamonds: But in truth it is not without reason that such are suspected by many Persons, and it is

not these Ornaments that entertain the Con-
jugal affection; and there is ground to
believe that the wantonness of their Dress
is rather contriv'd for their Gallants than
their Husbands.

Of Beauty.

THEY THAT ADORE or that
despise Beauty, do defer too much or
too little to the Image of God. It is one
of the rare presents that Heaven has made
to this lower World; but we ought to at-
tribute all the worth of it to the Power
and Bounty of him that has gratified us
therewith. In the Opinion of *Plato* it is
an Humane Splendour amiable in its own
Nature, that has power to ravish with plea-
sure the Mind and the Eye.

And certainly this ought to be a sign
of the inclination that we have to good.
For as much as heretofore the Priests that
were deform'd were excluded from the
Temple, let us not have an ill opinion of
Beauty which God himself did judge ne-
cessary to them that were to approach his
Altars. The Judgments that we make of
the Beauty of the Mind, by that of the
Body, are not often the worst grounded.

The

The Soul, like a Queen, makes the richest preparations where she intends to appear with the greatest luster and advantage. And in truth, if Vertue be necessary for the establishment of Sovereign Authority, it seems that Beauty is at least as necessary to grace it. If we find sometimes the fine Wits in ill contriv'd Bodies, these are like Relicks ill enshrin'd, to which a great many will not pay so much Reverence as they would if they were cover'd with Gold and Pearls.

This Lovely Quality is worthy of Empire, in all places where there are Eyes and Reason. It has Enemies no where but there where it meets with the blind and the stupid. The only glorious Countenance of *Scipio Africanus* made him conquer several Barbarous Nations even without drawing his Sword; and *Helio-gabalus* himself, from being Priest of the Sun, became Emperor of the whole World as soon as his Mother had shew'd him to the Souldiers. Thus do the whole World, pay their Respects to those to whom Nature has given this advantage; and however they sometimes blame Beauty, yet at least they pity it too.

THE VULGAR believe that if there is not Evil cover'd with Beauty, yet at least Misfortune attends it; and there is

danger in it, if Sin be not found with it. But, to say the truth, when this is an occasion of evil, it is often an Innocent that makes the Criminals; and they who complain of it do as unjustly as they who should accuse the Sun for dazling their Sight when they have been staring too steddily upon that "Star. That is but hardly kept (says The-
 " *opbraffus*) which a great many love and
 " desire, and there can be no great as-
 " surance or safety in the possession of that
 " which the whole World aspires to. Some-
 " times they will lay so long Siege to those
 " Cities, and attack them on so many sides,
 " that at length they will make themselves
 " Masters.

The Authority of this Great person does no prejudice to Beauty, since 'tis impossible to say any thing more to its praise, than to own that all desire this as an Object the most pleasing to them. And if the Fair sometimes suffer themselves to be won upon, this complaint must be directed to their Minds rather than their Faces. A Place is not the less strong, because they have yielded it up who ought to defend it; the default is in the Captain rather than in the Citadel. Be it as it will, the Homely have no advantage in this reproach: For since they are never solicited, there is no resistance there to give a judgment of their strength.

strength. They are at more cost and pains to defend themselves from disdain than pursuits, and Patience is the Vertue which they have rather most occasion for.

THERE ARE SOME will accuse the Fair of being scornful: But if this be well consider'd, it would be acknowledg'd that their Disdain comes often from the goodness of their Conscience rather than from their Vanity; because they know not how to endure those Idolatrous Addresses, and excessive Praises, which enamour'd Fools or crafty Pretenders make use of to catch them with. As wise Kings deride the Complements of depending Courtiers, as knowing that 'tis Interest more than Affection that inspires them: The Ladies also ought to deride the Respects of such Gallants, for as much as with all their cares and all their labours they seek nothing still but their own pleasure, and the destruction of those that give ear to them: All their labour and endeavour aims at, and is confind to, their own pleasure and the ruin of the imprudent. There is not so much Presumption in the most Fair as there is of Cowardliness in those Men who put themselves into the Fetters; the Services which they pay, and the proud Names they give the conquering Mistress, do discover as much their own weakness and extravagance

as they do their Passions: Is there any ground to call that Empire Tyrannical, where the Vassals are so Voluntary and so much the Enemies of their own Liberty?

YET I DO NOT intend for all this to make an Apology for those that are really Vain but only for those that ingenuous and plain. Those Women who persuade themselves that the great number of their Gallants adds something to their Beauty, and who please themselves so much in the submissions and respects that they pay them; these give a great advantage to their Enemies, and shew that they may be conquer'd at an easy rate, since that there is nothing necessary to this but a few Respects and flattering Commendations. These are things of which the Men will be no less prodigal than the Women can possibly be desirous of them. But the Women ought to believe, that when plain Ingenuity makes a bargain with Craft and Artifice it can never make it to advantage. It often comes to pass, that if the Women are fair, those that praise have a design to deceive them; if they are not fair, they intend to deride them: For this reason they have all of them great occasion both for Wit and Vertue, in order to defend themselves from danger and contempt.

THERE ARE that scruple altogether the

the praising of Beauty, because it fades in a little time, it endures but like the sudden flashes of Lightning, and that very often it forebodes no less than the approach of Storms and Tempests. It is a Flower, say they, which is gone almost as soon as it is blown, which the Winds tear in pieces, the Sun withers, and the Rain beats down, and which is of so delicate a constitution, that even without the help of Enemies, it perishes by its own Weakness. But what do they here-in say of this, which may not also be said of other things in the world, which also are not able to last always? If they complain of Beauty, it is because this has not the duration of the Stars, as it has the Value and the Brightness of them. And nevertheless it must be acknowledged, that the most Fair may find an excellent remedy against Vanity and Pride, if sometimes at the age of sixteen or of twenty years, they would present to themselves the defects, and inconveniences of Old Age. Whatever fine Feathers nature or art now affords, they would be as much ashamed as the Peacock is when he views his black Feet, if they would foresee a little so great alterations and ruins. I do not make profession here of Preaching the four last things that men must come to; but it seems to me that none ought to afflict themselves for a thing that Time will take away from them insensibly,

sibly, yea which diminishes every moment in spight of all the Art that can be used to preserve it.

It is true, that *Cato* had so great an esteem of Beauty, that he said publickly, that it was no less crime to injure it, than to rife a Temple. But he spake of that which is Natural, not of that which is Studied and affected. *Sulpicia*, among the *Romans* had so beautiful Eyes, that those of her time could not look upon her without being ready to adore her. The Neck and Breasts of *Theodora*, the *Athenian*, were so agreeable, that *Socrates* himself became in love with her. These are the Features or Charms that ought not either to be sought by Artifice, or possess'd with Vanity; Nature has favour'd some persons with these things with design to please the Eye; and to elevate the Mind to the love of him who is the source of all human Perfections. The forced and feigned Beauties luckily fail in the view of all the world, just after the manner of those false and seeming Stars, which after they have a while abused our Eyes, do demonstrate by their fall, that we took a Vapour for a Star.

How much Art and Pains do many fruitlessly employ to cover the defects of Nature, as if it were not better worth their while to have recourse to Vertue than to Disguise; or as if it would not be much more to their
advan-

advantage to repair what is wanting in the Face by the qualities of the Mind? Their design succeeds extreamly ill, and must do so, because their Vanity appears with their Homeliness, and they are not the more excusable hereby, but more ridiculous. They would think it very strange if they were treated after the fashion as *Phryne* did with those that came into her Company: As soon as this Courtisan appear'd, she defaced the lustre of all the Ladies at the Assembly, leaving them no other Colour than what Shame and Jealousie could afford. She invented a Play to make them merry, wherein every one commanded by turns in their rank. She commanded Water to be brought, and that every one should wash her Hands and her Face. As soon as they had obeyed her Commands, there was discover'd all their Paint and Disguise, there was not a person could be known, they had quite other Faces all full of Blemishes, and Features that were frightful. This Sport would not be at all less troublesom to many of our Age, than it was advantageous to that extraordinary Beauty. It was also by her that the *Arcopagites* themselves lost the reputation of being incorruptible Judges, for they did not believe her innocent; nevertheless after they had seen her, they were not able to judge her guilty. *Hippias* pleaded unsuccessfully against

against her, tho he was a most eloquent man, for as soon as she appear'd, her Presence serv'd her for an Apology, and she needed but to shew that she might defend her self. It is not only now-ady that the Fair carry the Cause. After that Justice has lifted up her Vail to see them, let them plead as little as they will, their Cause will succeed well for them.

Of Curiosity and Slander.

CURIOSITY is not very often at a good agreement with Silence; those that are desirous to learn abundance of News, are not usually resolv'd to conceal it, and Slander does infallibly make waste of that which an Imprudent Curiosity has collected. The Mind of these Curious Women resembles the Barrel full of holes which the *Danaides* were condemned to fill, which still let out the Water as fast as it was put in: That which enters by the Ear, goes out immediately at the Mouth, because the indiscretion which lets them hear no less inconsiderately than they speak, does no more re-

safe the opening to Lies, for their going out, than for their coming in.

I do not blame at all that Divine Curiosity of the Philosophers, and the great Wits, which reveals to us the Secrets of Nature, and has afforded us the means to govern the Passions of the Soul. I condemn only that Curiosity which carries us after the knowledge of things unprofitable or vicious, and leaves us strangers to the knowledge of our selves.

And to say the truth, I have no less shame than compassion, when I see several that amuse themselves with the little stories of the place they live in, and who know nothing but what is impertinent and troublesome to good Companies. They seek to adorn their Minds as the *Chinese* do to beautify their Cabinets, I mean with some antiquated outlandish Trifle or sorry Pedlary. I would advise those of this humour, who are for spending all their time about things unuseful, to learn themselves the Anatomy of little Flies, or the Art of numbring the Atoms of the Air: And that they may treat their Bodies as ill as they do their Minds, I would have them live upon such things as Cray-fish, where they may find more employment than nourishment. This inconsiderateness

rateness gives but an ill credit to their Wit, and no better to their Conscience : We shall judge hereupon, that they do not employ their Time only to hear superfluous things, but also to hear evil ones : And above all, the readinesse they have to believe a fault in another, is a most certain sign of that which they have to commit as much themselves.

THERE ARE THEN some that listen with delight to all manner of Slanders; that cannot endure one should speak to the advantage of any; and who think that while their Company are finding fault with all the World besides them, they make an Apology for their faults in shewing them many like themselves : As if the number of Criminals could authorise their Wickedness. When they hear the Vertues of some rewarded with their deserved Praises, they sit as sad and uneasie, as the Ugly are wont to be when the Fair are complemented in their presence. And if we should examin well their thoughts, we should find here yet a much blacker source of evil. They are glad to have Companions in the Infamy, but they would not have any partake with them in the Pleasure; they have more of Jealousie than of Shame, and persuade themselves, that those who make use
of

of their Pastime do steal something from them. They are of the humour of the Emperor *Tiberius*, who sent his Officers about the City of *Rome* to discover and condemn the Adulterers, that there might be none but himself alone.

The Vertuous excuse Faults rather than publish them; And on the Contrary, the Vicious are always unmerciful towards those that are like themselves, to make shew as if that Crime were unknown to them. But the effects give the Lye to their words, and this Artifice succeeds so ill to them, that they disgrace, instead of defending themselves. The Honest and Good Women chase Vice out of the World by their Charity, and the Licentious banish Vertue by their Slanders. But if I grant that some do not utter Slanders themselves; yet nevertheless when they listen and give credit to these, their two Ears are no less guilty than the Tongue of the others: And if Calumny is a Murder of the Reputation, these are at least to be accounted Accessories.

It is easie to know a Woman that is Chast from her that is not so: The latter will examin all things even to the least circumstances; their own Wickedness serves them
for

for pattern to judge of evil by ; their own experience and design make them put bad interpretations upon innocent things. After *Procris* had been treacherous to her Husband, she was always a distrustful Spy upon upon his Actions; she could not without difficulty believe him innocent in a thing wherein her self was so guilty. The Vicious are always in an Alarm, they fear that others should abuse their liberty ; and cannot persuade themselves that a Walk or a little Conversation can be innocent. They apprehend that others will do as much ill as they themselves have done, or as they were willing to have committed if they had had as much power as wickedness. And nevertheless, in truth, they have no better way in the World to conceal their own sin, than to make shew of astonishment and displeasure when they hear others condemned. For in refusing to give credit to Slanders, people would be ready to judge of them that they are far from being guilty of a Crime, of which the very Name is Odious to them. But if they testify their repugnance but by halves, and their Look permits what their Tongue forbids ; this will give Courage to the Vicious, who are very glad to have to do with those that will not use them roughly.

BUT

BUT TO EXAMINE the Vice well, it will be convenient to see wherein Flattery and Slander are alike or different. The one assaults us with Poison, the other with a Sword. But considering the thing well, it seems to me that there are more to be found who resist Slander than Flattery: because the love of our selves, which fortifies us against Blame, renders us weak when we are assaulted with Praise. It was a Sentence derived from Divine Wisdom, which Solomon has to this purpose; *As a firing Pot for Silver, and the Furnace for Gold, so is a Man to his praise.* I put these two Vices together, because they are in a manner always inseparable, and we may ordinarily find, that those given to Slander are as much addicted also to Flattery. The one and the other comes from Cowardice; in that this is a want of Courage for a Man not to dare to speak the truth freely, and not to be able to reprove the things that are Faulty to their Faces who commit them. But to say truth, if there be weakness of Spirit in them who exercise Slander, there is no less in those who cannot conquer and deride it. For what necessity is there that we should be sick when the pain and the sense of it depends upon our selves? There is not a necessity for Patience here, it is enough to despise; we ought not to receive the Wounds of Slander, when we have it in our power to hinder them from reaching to us.

M

There

There are some that use great Art in venting their Slanders, who are not willing to hurt but with gilded Weapons ; they disguise their disparagement of another under an appearance of Praise. If they speak any thing that is ill, they will pretend it is with regret that they do so : But this is to imitate the Archers, who draw the Arrow towards them, but 'tis that they may the better send it to the Mark they aim at. How much Error and Vanity is there in our Judgments and Discourses ! since even between the Morning and the Evening we differ more from our selves than perhaps we do from others ? How can we be assured that she who yesterday was involv'd in Pleasures, may not to day be chusing Austerities ? But supposing that our Judgment were not false, we cease not for all that to sin against Charity, though we do not against Truth.

Those that have as yet committed but one Fault ought not to be denominated Vicious : those that have done many, it may be, will continue in them no longer ; the former have perhaps corrected, the latter have changed themselves. And in truth there can be no great assurance that we can speak any sort of ill concerning any Person without being in danger of a lye, since there needs but one moment or one thought to alter her who is called by an ill name, and to make her a Penitent or a Sinner. After all, it is no small Consolation to Innocence

cence to think that Calumny even at its first birth had the Impudence to assault the Pure and most Holy God; and that through all Ages this has been the base Enemy of Vertue. This is a forcible reason why we should not be troubled at it. But that you may not be guilty of it, the grand remedy is to avoid Idleness, and to believe that there is no time more proper and fit to speak evil in, than that which we do not employ in doing Good.

Of the Cruel and the Compassionate.

WHATEVER the most of Men think of the Fury of Women, yet is Pity so natural to them, and their Inclination is so strongly carried to Mercy, that the Furies themselves could not forbear to weep for the Misfortune of *Orpheus* when he went down into Hell, to beg that his Wife *Euclidice* might be return'd to him. But if those merciless places, where it is said horror continually reigns together with implacable Cruelty, could not possibly stifle the motions of Compassion to this miserable Person; may not this Fable alone make us judge, that Gentleness and Pity is a quality inseparable from the Ladies; if we had nothing else to incline us to this belief, as indeed we have a great num-

ber of Examples, and most true Instances in History that may dispose us to it. Does not this Fiction show that even the worst of the Sex have always, I know not what, tenderness in them that they cannot wholly put off; and that they never are wholly destitute of Compassion for the Unfortunate, nor of Clemency to the Guilty?

Nevertheless many accuse them of being extream in their Passions: They believe that if a Woman defers a while to take Vengeance for an Injury, she does this only to render it the more Violent when she takes it: and especially that she will very rarely pardon any that injure her in her Love or her Fortune. But although this mistake is more worthy to be pass'd by with Disdain than to be particularly answer'd, I will nevertheless say this to it; That if any will give themselves the trouble to examine their Inclination, they shall find it as innocent in this matter as their Enemies have represented it guilty, and altogether worthy of excuse at least, if not of Praise. The indifferent sort of Wits are moved easily, and easily appeased again; for their violence tires it self, and it comes necessarily to pass, that their Passion weakens it self, if it continues a little while, because it is neither natural nor reasonable. But when a Passion is just, it always augments its self the longer it endures; for the Thought and Meditation preserves it, and gives it force,
while

while a Person muses the more deliberately upon the reasons that gave it birth. The resentments of the Feeble and the Strong Spirits resemble Fire, which goes out almost as soon as it is kindled in Flax or Tow ; but maintains it self a long while in Iron or any such more solid Matter. The Ladies are not of that light Temperament as to be transported without reason : They are as well hard to be appeased as to be provoked ; they are equally hard to be brought either to War or Peace.

They would deceive themselves not a little, who should imagine for this that my Proofs are as unreasonable as unartificial : I always submit my Morals to Christianity ; and I own that I should make of them rather a School for Vice than for Vertue, if I would justify Revenge to oblige the Ladies ; which were also to affront both Religion and even their Humour which is not addicted but to Gentleness and Civility. I praise only their Constancy in designs when they are just, otherwise I should offend instead of obliging them, if I should defend a sin so prejudicial to themselves, and which makes them pass for Monsters. They have so little Inclination to this, and are so unfit for it, that it is not only unbecoming them to be Cruel, but also even to be Severe ; and of the two parts there are of Justice, they seem to be contrived for the exercise of that which is the least Rigorous. And, to say the truth, it is no less shameful

to see a Woman without Pity, than a Man would be without Courage.

A N D nevertheless that they may not deceive themselves in this part of Morality, I must say they ought not to be prodigal of their Compassion, nor to throw it away upon all sorts of re-encounters. *Anaxarete*, in *Ovid*, was not at all Cruel when she saw the desperate *Iphis* die before her Gate without offering to prevent it. Her refusal was just, because his demand was not ; and he was a Criminal that executed Justice upon himself for his own Rashness. The Honest Woman ought to fear less the Ruine of a Troublesome Person, than the loss of her own Honour : and it would be a sign of very little Judgment, if a Woman should be Cruel to her self, in order to the being so impertinently pitiful to the insolent or foolish.

B U T O U T of this occasion where Gentleness were a Crime ; and beside this Honesty which makes severity absolutely necessary , the Ladies ought always to represent to themselves, that Cruelty comes from Weakness of Spirit, that they who are destitute of Compassion want also Knowledge and Courage. Most certainly, the most Generous are the most Pitiful. Those Ladies know 'tis more Glorious to conquer their Passions than their Enemies : and that to give a life when 'tis in their power to take it away, is, as it were, to raise the Dead without the working of
a Mi-

a Miracle. The Proud and the Vicious Women seem incapable of this Vertue, because, while they find a great many Enemies to their ill designs, there is not a wickedness so black and horrid but their Passion may inspire them therewith, for the ruin of those who hinder them from enjoying the Pleasures they desire, or the Fortune they aim at. *Aphrodisia* the Wife of the Emperour *Diocletian* try'd all sorts of ways to make her self Belov'd by her Son-in-law *Eraſtus*: but after she had used a thousand Insinuations, in a private Chamber too, where she thought the opportunity would help her to a Conquest, he still most vertuously refused, and that refusal created in her no less hatred than shame. She went all confused and disordered as she was to the Emperour, her Husband, to accuse this Innocent Prince of that Crime which she could not perswade him to commit. It is the Custom of those that are Debauched to change their Love into Hatred when their desires are not satisfied as soon as they discover them: For they are willing to preserve their own Reputation, though by the Ruine of those who were Witnesses to their wicked Intentions, and would not be complices with them. There was some ground for the Philosophy of *Chilo* when he publickly maintained, concerning such Women, That it is the last and the greatest evil any Man can wish his Enemies, to fall under the out-

ragious Anger of a Woman: And it seems indeed to be an incomparable Master-piece, and such as hardly any Man could ever learn the Art of Performing to appease a Furious Woman.

BUT THAT we may most forcibly assault this Vice of Cruelty, and make this Sex conceive yet a greater horror against it, I suppose this further Addition may suffice; To say, as is most true, That this is as contrary to Beauty and a good Face, as it is to a good Conscience, and wrongs it as much: Though Tears have something of Charm and Gracefulness upon the Countenance, yet Anger has not the same Privilege with Sadness. Though we may often see a Melancholy Person very beautiful, yet I could never hear any one say that a Woman look'd lovely in her Fury. I grant that for the resistance of other Passions they have need of some Philosophy; but for the cure of this, methinks, they should need only a Looking-Glass; they should need only to see that they might be perswaded to correct themselves: and it is perhaps for this reason that they commonly dare not view themselves in this Condition, for fear they should be ashamed at the sight.

This Passion is too violent not to confound and deface the most beautiful Features of any Countenance, the Eyes by little and little change their pleasing Charms into Terror; the Vexation of the Soul paints it self
upon

upon all the Behaviour ; and this may come to that degree of Horrour as to put a Man to his Prayers when he approaches them, and to make them as frightful as *Demoniacks*, while their Rage puts them into the Postures and Looks of those miserable Creatures. The Head of *Medusa*, which gave so much fear to all the World, had only the Hair of it turn'd into Serpents : These Women by right ought to have their Eye-brows of the same sort, that they might be entirely frightful. And it must needs be that the Devil who inspires them with so much Fury, must cast, as it were, a Mist before their Eyes, and confound their sight when they behold their own Faces in a Glass, since they are not afraid of themselves ; and instead of being contented that Men endure them, they are ambitious of being loved. They require Caresses, and in truth do hardly deserve our Patience. Let Hell keep the Infernal Furies to it self, these are enough to this World to commit or perswade Crimes that are more black and horrid than those that have fetcht Fire and Brimstone from Heaven, or have caused the Earth to open and swallow up alive the committers of them.

Of a Good Grace.

THE SOUL is not more necessary to Life, than a Good Grace is to Pleasing: It gives Lustre to the Beautiful, and cures a great deal of the Defect in those that are not so. As soon as any are possess'd of this amiable quality, all that which they undertake is comely and agreeable. There are many sorts of it; every Humour has its Charms, as every Star its Influences; Hearts may be wounded, as well as Bodies, with different Weapons: The Looks, the Gate, the Discourse, the Actions, the Voice, and even the Silence have their diverse attractives: and so far does this truth go, that some are to be found who never appear more lovely than when they are Weeping; As *Panthea* who had so much Grace in her Melancholy, that *Araspes* was constrained to fall in Love with her Tears.

In truth it seems as if this agreeable quality were even natural to the Women, and that they possess it without any Labour or Study: Nevertheless, though Birth does contribute very much to it, and the force of a Good Grace is much easier felt than it can be express'd; yet it must be acknowledged, that some Rules may be given, in order to the rendring it the more perfect. It must be declared in
this

Of a good Grace. 171

this place, That the Beauty of the Body does in some measure depend upon the Wit, and that the Laws of a Good Grace are join'd to those of Morality. Wickedness has necessarily those Remorses that the greatest dissimulation cannot long conceal. Rage, Cruelty, Love, and Restlessness appear on the Forehead; the Countenance does depend upon the Passions in its Serenity or Trouble, as the Dial depends upon the Motions of the Clock for showing of the Hours. Insomuch, that for the preserving a Good Grace, it is necessary that you know how to regulate the Motions of the Mind as well as those of the Body.

AND TO BEGIN with that which is of most importance, there is nothing that ought to be avoided so much as the Artifice that is constrain'd. They must not aspire after the Excellence that is impossible; Art cannot employ too much endeavour any more than Nature, without forming a Monster. It often comes to pass through the extream desire they have to please, that they cause a hatred and distaste instead of liking and love. When they employ too much Care in their Discourse, instead of a natural and plain expressing of their Thoughts, they disturb and confound themselves. They resemble those Vessels that have a very narrow Mouth, out of which nothing can come, though they be full, but with noise and violence. As constraint disgusts in the brightest Actions, so a plainness pleases

pleases even in the meanest. That Woman has Charms which no one can resist because they proceed from Innocence; and Affectation is never without some Imperfections, or without a too great self-love.

What an unreasonable thing it is, not to dare to laugh, for fear of making the Patches fall off; or lest they should change their Colour at any other time of the day than in the Morning when they are dressing? This is nevertheless the Fashion of those who will not endure a Glass that does not flatter them, nor like the Day, but in a false Light; and tho they pretend to be very devout, yet they will not come to Prayers but by Candle-light: What a real Persecution it would be to these Ladies to bring them to Mass, and force them to undergo the sprinkling of Holy-Water, whereby their Paint would be diluted, and the ill Features of their Faces discover'd. But their Design appears with their Deformity hereby, in that while they endeavour to hide their Defects, they render them the more conspicuous.

A good Grace is so much an Enemy and Stranger to this Slavery and Racking, that if we can always do well, I cannot tell whether we can always please; we must allow of frequent Intervals to relieve the Spirits. Art in this case ought to conform it self to Nature, that has not stuck the Stars so thick in the Sky, nor planted Flowers so in the Meadows as that
there

Of a good Grace. 173

there is no Space between them. And although the Flowers are not comparable to the Stars in Beauty or Value ; yet nevertheless we commonly look upon them with more Pleasure and Attention, because their duration being of so short continuance, they always leave us with an Appetite and a Desire to see them again. The Spirits may come to distaste as well as the Senses, and may have need of Repose, and some Release for the digesting of their Pleasures.

Yet it is not my Intention in saying this, to perswade that they should study Faults, but that, provided they be light ones, they may be sometimes so happily committed that they shall become advantageous ; forasmuch as the Shamefac'dness which ordinarily attends them, and which appears on the Countenance, is an infallible Testimony of an innocent Soul, and such as is far from the conceiving of great Evils when it is so sensible of small ones, and that even when they are but imaginary ones too. If then a good Grace observes to do all things as it were naturally and without Study, it follows that Plainness is much better than Constraint. All the World does well enough know that there is difficulty in doing every thing that is rare. Address is not used to show that we perform with Difficulty ; an untought Villager can easily do as much as that ; but it is to serve for the concealing that difficulty cunningly, without letting the Artifice be discover'd.

PLAIN-

PLAINNESS is not less desirable in Discourse than in Actions; the Words that are most common, are the most excellent, and every Word that is obscure is forbidden. That Philosopher that always wept when he consider'd Mankind, perhaps would have had some inclination to laugh, if he had heard some of those Women talk, who have a mind to be thought more learned than they are: They are always using in discourse the most uncommon and unknown Words, and such as far better express their extravagant Folly than their Thoughts.

THIS EXCESSIVE Desire to please which we have condemn'd, is almost continually join'd with a Fear that they do not. And from hence it comes to pass, that when these two contrary Passions meet together in one mind they must needs cause great inequalities and remarkable alterations; because, if the Desire excites us, the Fear again damps us; when the one animates us to the speaking of a good Word, the other interrupts us and obliges to Silence. We may judge from hence how much wrong this Fear does to a good Grace as well as Vanity and Constraint. It ordinarily comes to pass, that those Women who are always in alarm, and every moment fear they shall mistake, do almost nothing else but mistake: An Extream Apprehension disposes the Mind to Errour as well as the Body to Distemper.

And

Of a Good Grace. 175

And to make a right Judgment of this troublesome Passion, it seems to me that if we enquire well into the Cause of it, we shall find the Education contributing no less to it than Temper and Birth. Those that are brought up in Slavery know not how to do any thing with Liberty; they dare not look up with that honest assurance which should give a good Grace to their Actions; their Thoughts are always mean, and whatever good Inclinations they may have, yet their Shame and Ignorance hinder them from succeeding in all their Enterprises.

Those Women that have seen nothing of the World are liable to be astonish'd at small Matters, because the constant Distrust which they have of themselves makes them fear and admire every thing. For the most part after their Reverences they have no other Compliments but those that are used at the ends of Letters. They would have found out an excellent Remedy for this if they would but persuade themselves that they ought not so easily to admire things; and that if they would give themselves leisure to examine that, which at first sight amazes them, they would often find after the conversation of an hour's length, that what was the Subject of their Admiration ought to cause their disdain. But this Resolution is not acquired without Labour: It is very Difficult, even to the best Wits, to have Address without Experience, or Readiness without

without Practice: Actions breed a Habit with some difficulty; but when the Habit is form'd, then that produces the Actions with Ornament and a good Grace. Nevertheless when I condemn the rustick Shame, I have no Intention herein to recommend Impudence; since both of them have Issues and Effects that are unjust; forasmuch as the one transports us beyond our Power and what becomes us, and the other detains us below them both: On the contrary, the Modesty that I desire, is placed between these two vicious Extreame, that it may keep us at a Distance from too good or from too ill an Opinion of our selves.

The Debauched or Lewd Woman.

THERE ARE perhaps but few Places that resemble the Isle of *Chio*, where it is said the Ladies preserved inviolate the Laws of Chastity and Honour during the space of seven hundred Years. I know not whether this was an Effect of their Skill, or of their Vertue; but be it as it will, this was a Chastity of a long Duration, and which deserves Admiration and Praise as much as the Corruption of the present Age deserves Re-proofs and Punishments. It may be this Discourse will not be at all pleasing to those Women

men to whom I desire it should be useful ; but if the Vicious are not disposed to receive our Remedies for their Cure, at least they must expect to undergo our Affronts for their shame. I speak boldly to all ; for if they be debauch'd, I desire not to be in any Favour with them ; and if they be honest, I do not fear that I shall hereby incur their Hatred. The one sort will applaud my Censure, and the other will do me honour in not approving my Discourse any more than I do their Life. However I shall always lie under this Inconvenience, That whatever Horrour I can help any to conceive at this Crime, it must be more obscure than injurious in such a matter. It is necessary to conceal, through Modesty, that which Hatred and Truth would require to be publish'd. It is herein that this Crime has a great advantage, in that, while it is worthy of Reproof, the Filthiness it self nevertheless serves it for a Defence, and one is constrained to spare it more out of shame than pity.

IT IS VERY TRUE then, that the Passion of the debauched does no way deserve the Name of Love ; it is some other Disease which cannot be cured but by a Miracle : and one may well say to the reproach of those that are infected with it, what the Poet said of *Myrrha* ; that it was not *Cupid* that enkindled such a Flame in her, but rather one of the most enraged Furies. This is a Fire from Hell, which has for its Smoak a black

N

and

and dismal Blindness, for its gloomy Shine a horrid Scandal, and for its Ashes Infamy and Shame. And how can their filthy Desire be call'd Love; when instead of Election there is nothing in it but a brutal Universality? For in loving all, to speak properly, they do not love any; since this is a Fire which mingle with all sorts of Matter, even to the burning in the Water: I mean it can entertain for its Objects such as are worthy of the greatest horroür and detestation.

AND NEVERTHELESS, though they have the Conscience full of Crimes, these are often they who would pass for Saints: As the most deform'd have most need of Paint and Disguise; so these Debauchees do sometimes seek the most industriously the Appearance of Vertue. It is for this Reason they live with so much constraint; and that there is nothing equal or natural in their Deportment; that they appear this day insolent according to their humour, and to morrow carry themselves modestly according to their Dissimulation and Hypocrisie. They who see the Vicious resemble the *Sirens*, perhaps do not know all the Mystery of this Comparison. One of these Monsters was named *Parthenope*, that is to say, *Virgin*; having a smiling Countenance to allure Mariners withal, and make them split upon those Rocks that were covered by the Water. The most Immodest will sometimes endeavour to appear the most Chast;

The Debauched. 179

Chast, but with all their Disguise they are but infamous Gulphs where none but the Imprudent and the Desperate make Shipwrack.

They make a show of Candour and ingenious Freedom, to the end they may the better deceive those who are simple enough to believe they do those things only out of Humour or very innocently, which they really do with Design to catch some Fool or other thereby. They do nevertheless even herein acknowledge the worth of Vertue, since they borrow the Appearance of that for the putting off their Vice. But herein their Design succeeds ill, whatever address they have, their Artifice renders them suspected: And as we know that is counterfeit Gold which bears too bright a Colour; so we may discover their disguised Vertue, by it's making too great a show. After all, the true Chastity does not seek so much to set off it self as that which is feigned; the Caution and Reservedness of an honest Woman is very different from that of her who is not so; the one is plain and natural, the other is constrain'd.

But to say the truth, it is not in this, that the Debauched seem to me most blameable; as yet they give some Honour to Vertue, when they take pains to counterfeit it. It seems that their Artifice is an effect of their Remorse, and that as the homely, in using paint, do own the Defects of their Faces; so the vicious, while they dissemble their Crime,

have still some horreur at it, not being able to endure that it should appear quite naked. But there are some Impudent Creatures who boast of their Filthiness, and make their Sin publickly appear; who love not the Conversation of any but those that are most licentious; and who entertain themselves always with the most shameful Discourses.

WHATEVER some say to excuse this Liberty, I must needs think that 'tis neither Genteelness nor good humour that gives such an easiness; that Complaisance does not at all extend hitherto; and that it is impossible any should live in such Looseness, without Offence to Modesty. Shamefac'dness is always severe when 'tis entire and true; it is corrupted when it becomes softned. If the Widow of *Sigismond* had been the most chaste of all Women; yet had she not put a Slur upon her Vertue, when she answer'd to them who counsell'd her not to marry again; That if she were to take an Example from any of the Birds, she should rather chuse to imitate the Sparrows than the Turtles? Though she had been never so innocent, this bold Discourse would have made her accounted guilty. If there was no wickedness in it; yet at least there was Impudence. But that I may dissemble nothing in this matter; it must be said that the true Modesty will not only restrain a Woman from speaking what is dishonest, but even from hearing, and giving her self

self leave to understand it. After *Helen* had opened the Letter which was sent her by *Paris*, she thought her self bound to refuse him nothing. When they have granted some Favour they engage themselves afterwards to do more than they intended. They who have indeed no Desire to be conquer'd, ought to take away at first all Hopes from those that assault them; for fear lest they should take a gentle Refusal for a disguis'd Permission.

THE DEBAUCHED are not only Impudent, but also Slanderers; perswading themselves by a false Politick, that they have justified their Sin if they can make it be thought universal. What Errour, what Blindness is here! If they slander the most Vertuous, they also hate those that are like themselves: So that the Conformity which produces Friendship in all other Professions, breeds nothing but Hatred among these. Is not this to be at Variance with all sorts of Persons; when the Presence of the Vertuous seems to reproach them with their Crimes, and the Company of those that are like them, does something diminish their Divertisement?

Lastly they add Cruelty to Impudence and Slander. And that we may not engage in an impossible Task in undertaking to reckon up all the ill that is in such Persons; it may suffice to say that we must reckon up all that there is of Wickedness and Crime in the whole World, to express all that which is a-

mong these abject Creatures. The Salvation of these hardned Wretches is almost desperate, their Repentance ought to be placed in the rank of Miracles; and whatever purposes they make of Conversion, they always relapse into the same Hell. It ought not to be a Wonder if they have sometimes in this World as much of Prosperity as of Sin; and if they are as happy as they are guilty, it is because the Righteous God deferrs their Punishment, to render it the more extream: He is not willing that they should encroach at all in this Life upon the Punishments which he prepares for them in the other.

I acknowledge, that in this Age, as well as in that of *Phryne*, there may be found too many fair Debauchees. But if we could well consider a great many of these infamous Sinners, and had compar'd the Lines of their Faces with those in their Consciences, we should often enough find in them an equal Deformity. They do not think what must needs be the ugly Horroar of their filthy old Age; since many of them have given their Nurses some fear almost from the Cradle. They do not consider that the wrinkles make a reckoning of the Years upon their Faces, as the figures do of the Hours upon a Dial. If one had painted the Portraicture of these wretches to the life, and any could perswade themselves that the Devils do resemble them, I believe the more
among

among Mankind would take care not to damn themselves, and that this frightful Object would beget in Men a greater fear of Hell than the severest Preachers are able to do.

But that I may be as short as obscure in a matter so unpleasing, I shall finish the Character of the Debauchee after the same manner as *Appelles* did one of his Pictures. After this admirable Limner had considered, with abundance of Pleasure, the Features and Charms of *Compaspe* a Mistress of *Alexander*, he was so in Love that he was not able to finish the Copy of so lovely an Original. I do that out of Hatred which he did out of Love, and I find so many horrible Lines in the Pourtraicture of these Infamous Wretches, that the Pencil falls out of my Hand; having too much Anger, and too few Reproaches, to finish this Peice with Colours that are black enough.

Of Jealousie.

WE ALWAYS lose with great regret what we possess with Love and keep with Care. It is for this reason that Jealousie is not so unjust as many imagine, since it only makes us fear lest another should ravish from

from us that which we think should be ours alone. Is there so great an Offence in watching for the safety of that which we love, especially in a time when Fidelity is so rare that there are not so many who live in no fear of being deceived, as there are that expect to be so. If the Goods of Fortune and of the Body yield to those of the Mind, then also is the loss of these the most sensible: and when any rob us of those Affections in another which we were possess'd of, and think we merit by our own, they take from us the greatest Good. And, to say truth, that we may Philosophize rightly, we must say, Love is like an Empire or Kingdom Ruled by two Persons only, where the Dominion cannot be extended further without destroying it; and where Obedience and Sovereignty are reciprocal. It is a Niggard that can be willing to lose nothing, not so much as a glance of the Eye or a little Hair of the Head.

In truth it is no less foolish to believe that there is no longer any Love in the Mind of one that is jealous, than it would be to think that a Man has no Life in him when he complains he is sick. On the contrary, as the grief and the sense of Sickness are not found in those that are Dead, so Jealousie can never be met with where there is really a Hatred and Indifference. And it may well be that this Passion may
have

Of Jealousie. - 185

have an appearance of Reason for it, since God himself heretofore permitted to the Husbands a tryal of the faithfulness of their Wives with the Water which was call'd the Water of Jealousie or Probation. If the suspicion of this sort had been a thing extravagant and unjust, God had forbidden it directly, instead of appointing so solemn a remedy for the cure of it, and had testified a Hatred rather than a Compassion for this Malady.

Also they deceive themselves grossly who think they have rendered Jealousie altogether Criminal, when they have said, That it makes us have too bad an Opinion of our own Merit, or of the Fidelity of the Person whom we love. If we examine well this Passion, we shall not find that it comes often from a distrust of our selves, and that we do not cease for that to believe our selves Amiable or others Amorous. It is a fear that does not so much discover our weakness, as it does declare that the Merit of what we love may make it sought after. And what do any in this which is not done by all for a Treasure or any other valuable thing, which it is not possible for us to love without having some fear of losing it? As they that believe very firmly may receive something of doubt, so the most assured in love are capable of some suspicion. The strongest Trees are moved with the Winds,
though

though the Roots are fast, when the Branches and the Leaves are shaken.

One would perhaps be very willing to throw off an ill Opinion, but the likenesses and conjectures solicit and shake us till we are forced to conclude rather on the side of fear than assurance. During this irresolution the Mind suffers much, and the appearances give a great deal of pain, when we cannot certainly judge whether they be true or false. There are good and bad Examples, either to make fear or to cure it: but ordinarily we fix our Thoughts more upon those Examples that persecute than on those that may comfort us. Such an one as that of *Penelope* affords comfort, when one represents to himself that she was twenty five Years faithful, during the Absence of *Ulysses* so long. But that of *Messalina* torments and awakens suspicion, when one thinks of her Infamy and Filthiness. Our Spirit wavers between both sides: and it is an unhappiness that conjectures having alarm'd us, we find or we invent, by much examining, something to change our doubt into a belief.

And if it be said that we ought to be at rest, after the experience that we have made of a Person who has testified her Affection by many effects: It seems to me that these Proofs cannot hinder but that we shall have a great deal of Trouble, because the fear that sometimes is not in our power, will put the

the worst Interpretation upon the least appearances, even to the busying it self afterwards with false Objects when it has not true ones. Whatever Fidelity we have proved, when Love has no more to desire, it begins to fear all. This is the natural course of our Passions which always threaten a change when they are extream; and which fall of themselves, without a true cause to do so, only because they are mutable and humane. *Hippocrates* has given us a Maxim to be observed, That our Bodies are in danger of a Disease when they have too much health and strength: A Poet has made an handsomer one concerning the alteration of those Minds that have too violent an Affection: The Will, says he, deserves a Wheel of Inconstancy for its Passions, as well as Fortune does for her Favours: when we are raised to the top we cannot long stay there, either out of our infelicity or our weakness.

Those that are arrived at the most eminent degree of Love, are like them that stand upon a very high building or hill; their Brain is confused, and though no Person thrusts them, they stagger and even fall of themselves through the meer fear of falling. When the Sun is arrived at the heighth of Noon he begins to go downward; for that not being able to get above that pitch, he retires and withdraws himself into another
He-

Hemisphere without being driven by any Person to it. Our Minds seem to have the same Motions; a disgust follows the pleasure by an order no less natural than that which makes the Night succeed and take place of the Day. We find our selves insensibly weary'd with pleasant things; and though the Soul be Immortal in its Nature, yet in its Actions, which have the Body and Animal Spirits for their Instruments, it fails not to testifie a Youth or Old Age with the Body.

Socrates said, That the Gods had endeavour'd to mingle together Pleasure and Pain; but when they found this could not be done, at least they would needs fasten them by their Tails, to the end that one might succeed the other, so to hinder in us both Insolence and Despair. This comes to pass sometimes when we contribute nothing towards it voluntarily; and as we pass from Joy to Sadness, so we often perceive that our Love changes it self either into coldness or indifference. The Distempers of the Mind, as well as those of the Body, do very often form themselves without our consent: we lose the Rest of the Soul as we do our Health, all at once; sometimes without having foreseen this change, and without being able to find either the Cause or the Remedy of this Passion, any more than we can that of a Quartan Ague.

BUT

BUT I HAVE too long spoken against my own sentiment as well as against truth it self, in favour of a Passion that ruins our Love, our Reputation, and the Quiet of the Mind; Reason begets Love, and Love Jealousie: but both the one and the other of these prove what some sorts of Worms are to the Subject in which they are bred, that is, the Destruction of it. The one kills the Father, the other the Mother. Let this Passion be moderated as it can be, it is always dangerous; and for this it is necessary to to commit an Injustice, in taking away the use of it for the sake of the abuse, because the one is too much fastened to the other. As there is not any Serpent so little but it has some Poison, so there is no Jealousie so well regulated, as not to engender a great deal of Mischief. They that compare it to the Ivy have made a handsome Comparison; for ordinarily that grows only upon old and ruinous Buildings: in like manner this Passion chuses out of all the rest of Mankind the most absurd and ill-natur'd Spirits. We may see the Ivy flourishing and green upon a Tree that is withered and dry; and by so much the more old a Man grows, by so much does this Passion grow more vigorous and young; so that it becomes more strong in those whom Age or want of Wit render more feeble or stupid. Other Plants have their Roots only at the foot of them,

them, the Ivy has roots every where, and even more than Leaves; Jealousie also roots its self more every day, and renders it self more inseparable from the Soul than the Ivy is from the Trees or Walls that it grows to.

They are none but the indifferent sort of Wits that are capable of this Contagion; the excellent are above and the very small ones below it. These latter are ignorant of the occasions for it and observe them not, the former surmount and despise them. It is in this that Stupidity attains the same pitch with Wisdom, and the Rusticks are as happy as the Philosophers. On the other side, they that afflict themselves for a misfortune which has no remedy but Patience, make their error the entertainment of the World, and are Lunatick, having the Moon whole in their Heads, while they think they have the horned half of it on their Foreheads. This is not to have a great Spirit to incommode ones self without obliging any body, and to damn ones self in this World that we might be sure not to miss of it. If the distrust of the Jealous be known, it increases the evil instead of bringing a remedy to it; if it be not known, it is superfluous to them. And 'tis an evil which when it is hid, Silence and modesty render it more insupportable.

I do not wonder at all if the Jealous are very meager, their Passion feeds its self only with Shadows and Phantasms. The good Wits knows how to restrain their Curiosity, while the indifferent ones give it an entire liberty, to learn that which it ought not to know; not minding that in the Trade of the World the most exact Persons have not always the best satisfaction in their Affairs. If we had well regulated our Opinions, we should have subjected many Enemies. Melancholy and Musing maintain Jealousie, divertisement and forgetfulness destroy it: the Spirit tires it self as well as the Eye when 'tis fastened too long to one Object. In such cases as this, we must gain our Victory as the *Parthians* did theirs, that is by flying; and must divert the thoughts rather than too obstinately fix them. It is an Enemy whose Weapons are poisoned, and to approach us is enough for it to conquer us. After that the memory has received it, the reason comes too late to make a resistance: It may be hindered from entering, but it never goes out till it has ruined them that entertain it.

Cydlippus among the *Romans* having taken a great deal of Pleasure in seeing a Combat of Bulls, he mused so much upon it all night, that in the morning he arose with Horns upon his Forehead. This Spectacle had pleased him, it had entertain'd his phancy, and

and at last his Imagination did him this evil office. It is after this fashion that many disorder their own Heads, without considering that their restlessness or their curiosity is always hurtful to them. For if they learn that their suspicions were false, they would be obliged to repent of them; if they find them to be true, they become miserable by having been too curious. They that say the sin of the Angels was Jealousie or Envy, seem, in part, to justify those that entertain this Passion, in that the Angels were capable of this, with all their light, which far surpasses the darkness of our Minds. But we may also learn by this example, that it was this which made Hell, and which daily renders Men miserable in the midst of Pleasures, even to the making Lovers lose their Paradise, if so imaginary contentments can yield one.

There is not a Wickedness so black but this Passion renders us capable to commit it, while it gives address to the most Clownish, and debauches the Vertuous under pretence of having satisfaction for an Injury. *Circe* being Jealous of *Scylla*, and fearing that *Glaucus* was in love with her, poison'd the Waters where she was wont to bathe her self, that she might turn the Beauteous Nymph into a Deform'd Monster. Murther, Poison, and Magick are but Sports to it, and it has no other bounds in its Inventions and its Crimes

than

than Impossibility. It is a strange thing that those Women who spend their time in Divertisements themselves, cannot forbear to be jealous of their Husbands, and violate the Law of Nature as well as the Law of God, in that they will not endure to receive the same usage that they give. They are very often Debauched themselves; for they practise what they fear others guilty of, and their fear arises from their experience. The jealous Minds never own their Error but when it is past remedy. All the World knew the suspicions that *Herod* had of *Mariamne*, and the occasion of them was nothing else but that she was beautiful; having no other ground to believe her guilty, but only that he thought her worthy to be sought after. But what Fury and what Rage was there in this! When he had put to death this Innocent Lady, he would call to her as if she were not dead, and thought to find her in his Palace who was convey'd to her Tomb: This Tyrant might well commit such a Crime every Month, since he could forget them so soon, and had a Memory as short as his Judgment. Jealousie does carry us away from our selves; we have some reason then to disown the effects of it when we are recover'd, and when we consider the Malice and Extravagance of it. We oftentimes, after his example, oblige the Persons whom we love to die with grief by our suspicions, and then afterwards we re-

gret this unprofitably ; we give them Reputation by our Repentance, but cannot restore the Life which their Melancholy has taken away : we condemn our blindness too late to justify their Innocence. The reports of Slanderers render'd *Procris* jealous of her Husband *Cephalus* ; she imagined he had a Mistress whom he went to meet in the Woods, instead of going to hunt there : she hid herself behind a Thicket to hear his Discourse when he should rest himself in the shade, and to discover the Object of his Meditations : he heard the noise of her, and believing it was some wild Beast he drove an Arrow into her heart and kill'd her, crying out *Cephalus*. This word made him understand that he had taken his Wife for a Beast, and it may be he was not much deceived : It is want of Wit to give Credit so lightly to small appearances, and to find bad Interpretations for good things. An honest Liberty is of more value than such a Constraint ; Liberty extinguishes the Fire that Restraint kindles. When the occasions to transgress are common, they will be despised : but when they are scarce, they will be eagerly laid hold on out of fear that they will not return with so much advantage.

IN ALL CASES, how extream soever a Jealousie may be, I think the Example of *Vulcan* may serve for a remedy to it. When he was Jealous of *Mars* and *Venus* he laid Nets to catch them in the sight
of

of all the Gods; but what did he get at last by his Curiosity and Cunning, but only to be declar'd infamous with the more solemnity, and to be cast out of Heaven, and break a Leg with the fall?

Nevertheless that none may deceive themselves in this matter, I desire they would take notice of this Distinction; That Jealousie respects Love, Envy the goods of Fortune, and 'tis Emulation that follows Vertue. The goods of Fortune are too gross, those of Love are too slight for our Minds, there are only those of Vertue that can deserve to be the Object of it. It is only in the pursuit of this that Competitors can endure one another, as well as many may agree to serve themselves of the Light of the Sun or the Influence of the Stars.

Also we may see, among the Ancients, that the three Graces hold each other by the Hand and are united in the Alliance of Vertue, while the Goddesses are at strife for the Honour of excelling in Beauty, and the Famous Triumvirate fell out about the Possession of the Universal Empire.

And if we may add for this purpose any thing of Christianity to our Morals, that we may find a remedy for the greatest Persecutions of Jealousie, let us observe the Example of the Blessed Virgin and her Husband Joseph; where we may find that the most Chast of all Women yet gave some Jealousie to

the most Honest and Sincere Man. There is in this sometimes more of Misfortune than of Malice ; and therefore those that are liable to be Jealous should like him despise the slight appearances of ground for it ; and those that are wrong'd by Jealousie should like her suffer patiently the suspicions of it. It would be no small Consolation to think, that after all the Proofs, and all the Witnesses that might constrain us to judge ill : it is better in this extremity to believe a Miracle than a Sin, and to own the Power of God than the weakness of a Creature.

Of Friendship, and the Love of Inclination, and that of Election.

SINCE there is no Pleasure in Life without Friendship ; and the greatest Prosperity is tedious, and the least Affliction without this is insupportable ; it is not fit I should forget this Divine Quality of Amity, wherein the Ladies have, at all times, greatly recommended themselves. It is not reasonable that I should pass by this lovely Vertue, to which they have even erected Altars among the most Barbarous Heathen Nations, and which exercises an Empire most absolute over the

the Hearts of Men, in all places where there is any Sense or Knowledge of it. There is then no need of long Proofs to make it appear, that Love and Amity are necessary to the World: It is of more importance to show how it is dangerous. It is more profitable to show the Use than the Worth of it. Most certainly if any know not how to distinguish well what is worthy of their Love, they must be very unhappy; for the imprudent and ill-placed Affections ordinarily prove a cause of the greatest evils that afflict our Lives. The disposal of Love is truly a source of Misery if not well directed, as well as it is of Felicity if it be so. For this reason we ought to examine our Love and Amity from the very birth of it, since all the Passions and all the Motions of the Soul depend on this. For as heretofore among the *Romans* when they had chosen a *Dictator*, they did at the same time depose all those that had any other Office, to the end that a new Lord might be attended with new Officers; so also when we change our Love all the other Passions change their nature; they all follow this first mover. If we hope or if we fear still, yet it is not for the same end, as it is not for the same Object. And in truth, when I think with myself that this Passion not only gives motion to all the rest, but also that it constrains us to espouse the qualities of those whom we love; and above all, that it never ends but as it

were with Life : I declare that it is in this more than in any other concern, that our choice is of great importance, and that we know not how to employ too much care and prudence to examine well whether that which at first we esteem worthy of our Love, does not indeed deserve our hatred and aversion. This choice is not less difficult than necessary. But since they commonly say that Love has two Eyes, that of Inclination, and that of Election ; I think that, to speak of this subject with some method, it will be convenient to shew with which of these it may see most clearly that which is Amiable.

AND TO BEGIN with the Love of Inclination which many esteem the best. What the Poets said of *Achilles* may give us a great light into it : For as we learn from Fables, that this great Captain had but one place in all his Body that was capable of receiving a Wound, and that every where besides neither Dart nor Arrow could injure him : In like manner it seems to me, that the only part in which our Soul is most sensible is that of Inclination ; and that they who have found out this fatal place, as *Paris* did the Heel of *Achilles*, need only to touch that, that they may wound and conquer us. Without finding this, let any render the best services they can, they will all be unprofitable to them ; or if they succeed sometimes it is with great difficulty and hazzard. One only look with

with Inclination has more effect than without this the devoirs of many Years can obtain. It is violent and yet constant ; though it is excited in a moment, yet it fails not to endure a long time. It sometimes finds in one instant its birth and its perfection. It was that which rendered *Dido* in Love with *Aeneas* from the very first time that she beheld him ; she begun to love as soon as she begun to know him : without taking any notice that this was a stranger whom a Tempest and not Love had cast upon the Coasts of *Carthage*. It is true that reason and consideration at first, as it was with this Queen, will endeavour sometimes to stifle those Sentiments that the Inclination gives birth to : But these are very uneffectual efforts, and we with difficulty resist the love that pleases : Reason it self takes its part, and becomes as complaisant as was the Sister of that Princess ; even to the devising and trying means to succeed in our desires. Inclination has no less of Skill and Cunning than of Courage. It can Enchant and Deceive even an *Argus* with his hundred Eyes. It can give Wings to convey us from a Labyrinth. There is nothing that it will not endure, that it will not undertake, And if it be said we may see some that can surmount this, and make themselves Masters of their Inclination, It must in truth be acknowledged that this is very rare ; it must

rather be believ'd that such were never seiz'd with this Malady, than that they are cured of it. Whatever any feign, all that which proceeds from our selves is very agreeable to us; we yield our selves to be carried easily away with the Stream of it; we can refuse it nothing: and when this *Eve* presents us with even a forbidden Apple, yet to comply with her, we forsake all our Interests. Neither should any wonder at this, since she was taken from our own Side, and is even a part of our selves. Though she sometimes may seem to us but evil; yet our Reason does not domineer over her but with regret. When we go about to combat this, we resemble those Fathers that are constrained to make War with their own Children, and who have as much fear even to gain the Victory as to lose it. But in truth, what ground is there that we should be willing to hinder the effects of our Inclination, when they are so sweet and so natural? What reason is there why this should be idly barren, and that so pleasant a cause should produce nothing? Can there be a better Amity or Love than that which comes from thence? Can there be a more faithful or more constant one? It is as pleasing as it is strong; it has no less sweetness than duration. We take no more pains to love an Object that Inclination carries us to, than a Stone does to fall towards its center, or the Fire to mount upwards towards its Sphere.

Sphere. If the Elements are neither heavy nor light in their natural places, and there is need of violence to draw them from thence; so neither can we divert our selves but with pain and trouble from the Object that we love out of Inclination. It is here that our affection finds its repose, and its most pure delights. There is some reason to say, That the Love which proceeds from Consideration does resemble the Fire that we have here below, which has always a need of nourishment, and which goes out if it be not always affixed to some combustible Matter; but on the other side, the love of Inclination is like that above in the Sun, its proper Element, which endures always equally, and maintains its self. This is the most natural as it is also the most noble. This Love is not mercenary at all, it does not nourish it self by any shameful pretentions; it proposes to it self no other end but only Love. I do not wonder at all if the Love of Consideration endures but a little while, and if it is stronger while it hopes, than when it is in possession; since it fastens upon us by Interest, and has no other bond but that of Pleasure or Profit. It holds us but by rotten Cords, which need but a little misfortune or sickness to break them. And if we are to judge that Amity the best which is able to endure the longest, we ought to account that of Inclination the most excellent, which as it is the most pure is also the

the most constant and lasting. There are some nevertheless who think it enough to disparage this to say, That it proceeds from the Love of our selves; but it seems to me that this Argument makes much for its Commendation, since one would conclude from thence, That 'tis almost as impossible to separate us from that we love with Inclination, as to separate us from our selves: and at least, that it will continue a long time if it comes from such a source. And if it be said, That we may also judge hereon, that this Love is blind as that commonly is which we bear to our selves: In truth I must return, That I am not able to see how this Opinion can maintain itself; I cannot comprehend why so many will have it, that Inclination is blind: We believe it has not Eyes because we do not see them; and if sometimes we cannot discover the causes of it, we chuse rather to say it has none, than to own that they are unknown to us. It is true, we cannot so well judge of the resemblance of Humours as of that of Faces. But nevertheless, if any would give themselves the trouble to search well into the Original of our Inclination, they would often find it: If they would give themselves leisure to Philosophise a little upon the Perfections of the Object that pleases us, they would infallibly find out wherein it is amiable.

It is from this Inclination it comes to pass many times, that of many who look upon a beautiful Face, there shall not be, it may be, more than one of them that has any lively feeling of its Charms: and those that deserve best find oftentimes more admirers than Servants: We do not love all that we commend: the Will does not always take the part of Reason; and we give sometimes our Approbation to a thing when we deny our Love to it. Many may have the same judgment, but it is not so easie that they should have the same Inclination: and though I grant that several Persons may love the same thing, yet this seldom comes to pass by the same Reason. As we have not an Appetite for all sorts of Meats, not even those that we may judge to be good: so we cannot have Inclination for all sorts of Persons, not even for those sometimes whom we judge to have a great deal of Merit. As there are divers relishes in the Sense, so there are different Inclinations in the Soul.

But why should we not follow Inclination in Love, when we follow it almost in all other things? In the chusing an Office, in the learning of a Trade, or in the studying of a Science, we have regard to the Humour and Temperament. Why then may we not do this as much in our love which is the most important thing in the World? And in truth, if we examine our Nature and Complexion before

before we addist our selves to Learning or any other Exercise? Why shall we not also seek for a Disposition to love as well as to study; since there is nothing more true than that as we cannot succeed in the Arts in despite of our Nature; so neither can we any better succeed in an Amity when it is against our Inclination. It must be acknowledg'd, that as the same Earth is not proper for all sorts of Seeds; so the same Heart is not capable of all sorts of Affections. It ought not to be a Wonder, if we have Inclination for one thing and not for another, any more than to see the Load-stone draw the Iron rather than Copper or Lead. And if we have a Love that is a little contrary to our humour, how do we entertain an eternal Sedition within our selves? We cannot be happy but by halves; our Inclination is upon the rack while our Reason is satisfied. It is true that is said of Love, that without Inclination it cannot long subsist; Without this an Amity has not an entire Satisfaction, nor even Confirmation. It is a Building without Foundation which needs but a Touch or Blast to throw it down. But to finish this Argument with the strongest Proof of all. Since Love ceases to live when it ceases to reign, and that it cannot divide its Power without losing it: That we may sufficiently prove the Love of Inclination to be the most Sovereign and the most Legitimate, it is enough to show that it is
the

the most single, and that it will never permit that we should love more than one thing. As we can have but one Sympathy, we cannot love perfectly more than one Object. On the contrary, as we can seek our Interest in several Persons, when we find it not in one alone; so this Love of Consideration may be divided; it may seek what is profitable in one, and what is agreeable and pleasing in another. After all, if Consideration and Inclination were to dispute before a Wise Judge, that he might determine to which of the two Love does most lawfully belong, as heretofore the two Mothers pleaded before *Solomon* for the living Child, Inclination would at length have the advantage: He would give Love to that, since it can endure no Division of it, as the other can, and because it will possess it or lose it entirely.

AFTER WE have seen the Reasons which are given to prove that Inclination is the more strong in Amity; it is time to examine those which may be brought to show that Election is the more assured and safe in such an important Concern. It shall then suffice, at the first, to make it appear how much Inclination is dangerous, to shew how blind it is. For as the Dawn precedes the rising of the Sun; so Knowledge ought to go before Love; and however Sympathy does act without Choice and Light; yet that which it does in a Moment, causes oftentimes the repentance of the whole Life. Election
is

is not so forward nor ready, 'tis true, and so it is not so unfortunate. And I think *Zeuxis* return'd a very prudent Answer to those that reproach'd him, for that he was long in finishing his Pieces: I, says he, am a long time in drawing a Picture, because what I draw is to endure a long time. One may say for a firm Affection that which he said for an excellent Picture: It is necessary that a long Experience should precede a true Amity, for fear lest a long Regret should follow an Election too lightly made. This of Sympathy is an Agreement very suddenly made; it often obliges it self without knowing to what Conditions; and commonly signs without having look'd upon the Articles. The Example of *Dido* alone sufficiently shews the tragick Effects of this Lightness: The Poet had reason to say that her Love was blind, and that it consisted of a Fire that had more heat than brightness. And in truth I find in this Fable, the Infelicity as well as the Blindness of this Love. If *Dido* had an Inclination, *Aeneas* had none at all; as she was imprudent, he was ungrateful. History and Experience afford us Examples enough of this sort; and when I make use of Fable I do this for Ornament to my Discourse, not to give it greater Strength. But to say truth; is not this a very weak Reason to perswade a Woman to love me, to say that I have a great Inclination for her? The same Argument I
bring

bring to perswade Love, may serve her for the refusal of giving it. If I say I follow my Inclination in loving such a Person, may not she say she follows hers in not loving me? Is not her Aversion as well founded as my Sympathy? If I wish that she would renounce her Humour to satisfy mine; has not she right to pretend to the same advantage over me? In truth, I extremely love what the Poets say of this matter. They feign that *Cupid* has two sorts of Arrows; the one of Gold, the other of Lead; the former gives Love, the latter Hatred: With the one he inflam'd *Apollo*, with the other he chill'd *Daphne*. Was not the Flight of this Shepherdess altogether as just as the Pursuit of the God? If he sought her because of an Inclination to her; she shunn'd him because she had an Aversion to him.

Besides, what Assurance have we, that any have an Inclination for us; what Marks that are sufficiently certain can any give whereby to know it? It is true, that we may well perceive our own; but whereby can we infallibly observe that of others? This can only, if at all, be done by the means of Reason, which ought to examine, whether that which we take at first for true, be not an Illusion or Fiction. And to speak rationally of this thing, when the Inclination surprises, as sometimes it does, our Reason, so as to make us too easily fall in love with an Object.

Reason

Reason then is found like a Servant interested or corrupted that will engage her Mistress to her Disadvantage: The Senses herein would often debauch the Spirit; they are Servants that are traiterous or ignorant, and bring false reports to their Master. Is it not then a great deal better that we love for the amiable Qualities that we see, than for an Inclination that is hidden from us? Why should we entertain a Love for which we know neither Cause nor good Reason? This is, in truth, to love by chance; here is nothing but Uncertainty. There can never be an intire Satisfaction in our Love, while we shall be in pain to know whether the Sympathy be equal on both sides. We perceive a Wound, without knowing the Hand that struck, and are enslav'd by invisible Chains. And I assure my self that if we would be curious to examine well that which has arrested us, we should soon acknowledge our Error and Imprudence. If we did but light up a Lamp as *Psyche* did, perhaps we should find, with her, that this Love is but a Child, who fears to be seen, lest we should know and despise his Weakness. It is a great unhappiness that we have some Difficulty to undeceive our selves. Though the Sentiments which are most natural are not the most reasonable, yet as the Earth cherishes best those Weeds that it brings forth of it self, more than the Plants that the Gardener sows in it: So we

seem

seem to entertain more carefully the Affections that come from our natural Corruption, than those that proceed from our Reason. Nevertheless we ought to consider that as the Physician corrects the Appetite to make it relish what is wholesome nourishment: So we ought also, if we will be wise, to regulate our minds that we may direct our Affections to right Objects. We must of necessity treat our selves like sick Persons in this case; there is nothing we ought so much to forbid our selves as that which pleases us most; our Inclination is no less deprav'd than their Taste; it proceeds from a poison'd Spring, it comes not from Nature sound and well; but from that which is corrupted. I approve mightily the Opinion of them who compare the Amity of Election to the Sun, and the Love of Inclination to the Moon; for the former is always equal, and the latter is commonly unconstant, full of Error and of Spots. The Moon of her self has no Brightness; Inclination alone has no Conduct. It has need to borrow that from Reason. And above all, after the same manner as the Moon appearing sometimes with the Sun, does not make the Day for all that, nor contribute any assistance towards the Enlightening of the World; so when by good Fortune the Love of Inclination meets with that of Election, it ought not to govern us, or make it self our Master, but on the contrary, it ought

to borrow all it's Light and Direction from the other. But to improve this Comparison a little further, I could wish to this purpose, that the Ladies would imitate Her whom the Holy Spirit describes in sacred Writ, as having the Moon under her Feet, and being all over inviron'd, and as it were cloathed with the Sun. I mean, that they ought not utterly to throw away Inclination, but to conquer and moderate it: that there should be in Love a little of Humour, and a great deal of Prudence: That Amity has no need of Inclination, but in its Birth; but has need of Consideration as long as it endures. If it be necessary that the one be the Mother of it, it is so too, that the other be the Nurse and Mistress. And in truth, Inclination is like an imprudent Mother, who loves her Children too well: They must be wrested from her Bosom as soon as they are brought forth, for fear that in Carelling and Embracing she should stifle them.

After all, this Inclination is nothing else for the most part but a Phantasm; the most learned find it difficult to express the Cause or the Nature of it. It is so occult and hidden, that many not being able to comprehend the Love that it gives Birth to, they say, it is they know not what, which forms it self they know not how; and which conquers by they know not what sort of Charms. There are some that teach, upon the Foundations

nations of *Plato's* Philosophy, That Inclination comes from Remembrance, and that our Souls, having view'd each other in another World before, it seems that this is not the beginning of a Love, but the continuance of it only. That this is not properly the Birth of an Affection but the awakening of it. In-
 so-much that, according to their Opinion, our Souls call to mind their former Alliance; no otherwise than as two persons that have mutually lov'd heretofore; when they see each other again after a long Separation, they are surpris'd at first sight; while the Imagination and Memory are at labour to discover and re-collect those that touch them. There are some others that attribute an Inclination to the Stars; and who will have it, that the same Cause which produces Flowers in the Bosom of the Earth, produces also the Sympathy that is in our Souls. Some again ascribe it to the four Qualities that they fancies are mingled in us; namely, Heat and Cold, Dryness and Moisture. And others make short Work of it, and ascribe it to Destiny. But that I may not trouble myself or the Reader with the Opinions of all those that deceive themselves, and who seek the Original of the Inclination there where it is not; it seems to me (that we may philosophize rightly) to proceed only from the Love of our selves. We love all that which resembles us, even to our Pictures; we cherish our Image in all

things where we see it. We love all that which comes from us : Fathers, for these reasons, love their Children ; Painters their Draughts ; Artificers their Work. It is from hence, that we may learn the great danger there is where the Love of Inclination engages us ; for since we very often love our selves on that side where we are most Imperfect, and we embrace even our very shadow like *Narcissus* : It follows from thence, that we are in danger to love the Imperfections of others if it happens that they resemble our own. If the love of our selves be blind, that of Inclination is so likewise ; this is an Effect that must carry the resemblance of its Cause.

But if this Love of Inclination were not so dangerous, and so full of darkness ; what need is there of this Sympathy, or natural Conformity ? And why may not Love place it there where it was not ? Love as well as Death equals all things, and makes a likeness where it does not find it. In loving (as well as dying, both Kings and Shepherds find themselves at the same point. Herein they are both Men equal, in respect of Affection and of Weakness. Love is like a Fire which can kindle another any where : It does not only transmit it self into the subject it burns, but also has power to dispose that to receive it : It removes the qualities contrary to its own, to put in others : It drives the Enemy from the place

place it lays Siege to, before it does render it self Master of it. And to say the truth, as there are hidden Forms in the Bosom of Matter which natural Agents are able to excite and produce; so there are hidden Inclinations in our Souls, which Conversation and Familiarity may give birth to. There needs no more but to seek well after them, and if we find them not at first, yet a little time usually produces them. How often do we see some Persons that distast us at the first, and who nevertheless, after a little Conversation, do highly please us? And others again who ravish us at the first sight, and afterwards displease us as much? Love may succeed to Aversion, as well as Aversion to Love. Experience sufficiently shows this; and as those Trees that are of different kinds being well grafted, do not fail to bring forth Fruit; so the Amity that is formed between two Persons of different Humours may not fail to succeed well. *Plato* had some reason to say, That Love is a Teacher of Musick; for as much as an Affection may breed as well in an inequality of Humours as a harmony may be made up of unequal Voices. And indeed what sort of Conformity can we find between the young and the old, who yet nevertheless do often mutually Love and Care for each other? What proportion or likeness is there between the Loadstone and the Iron? If the one drew the other out of Sympathy and Resemblance,

would not Iron be rather attracted by Iron than by the Stone, to which it has a great deal less likeness?

But to the end that we may the better see how shameful and unjust this Love of Inclination is, it is enough to consider that they who love us only out of Inclination, do affront us: they do not love us at all for any Merit in us, since very often they love before they know us, and become amorous before they can well know whether we are amiable or not. This is an effect of their Temper rather than Choice, and in my Opinion, we have no great Obligation to them for the doing that which they cannot hinder.

It A V I N G thus shown what there is of Good and Evil in these two sorts of Amities, it will be very easy to observe what will be the best Use of them. It is not necessary to divide, but only to regulate them. It is true that these are to our Minds, like the two falsified Poles to the Heavens, on which they turn; these are the Poles of our Thoughts and Actions. And as the one Pole of the Heavens is under our Feet while the other is elevated above our Heads; so it seems fit that we have less regard to Inclination than to Election, and this latter ought to serve us for a Star to guide our Love and Friendship by. They say the Great Alexander had two Favourites, whom he obliged after a very
 different

different fashion; He lov'd *Epheslion* tenderly as the Companion of his Pleasures, and *Craterus* strongly for the government of his Estate and Affairs: As Emperour he esteem'd the one, as *Alexander* he lov'd the other. It is necessary to join these two sorts of Love together to make a perfect one, lest Love, being without Inclination, be constrain'd, or being without Election it be too Imprudent. If there be no Consideration, Love is without Conduct: If there be no Sympathy in it, 'tis without much Pleasure and Sweetness. In truth it seems as if these two Loves are in one Soul after the same manner that those two Twins, of whom the Holy Scripture speaks, were in the Womb of their Mother. These are two Brothers of which the one is foremost in the Order of Nature, but nevertheless he must not have the advantage of this. The one is the more violent and impetuous, the other is the more gentle and prudent. And it is the unhappiness of our Minds, as it was of their dying Father, to incline more to the side of that Love which is the more natural, and which proceeds from Sympathy. But as the Mother of *Jacob* gave him means to supplant his Brother, it ought also to be, that Reason should direct us how to regulate Inclination, so that the Election may be the Mistress of it.

P 4 After

216 Of Complaisance.

After all, if any should demand of me the Rules that are most necessary to be observed in our Amity ; as well for the satisfaction of the Conscience as of the Mind ; in my Opinion there is no better than this ; To believe that our Affection is unjust whenever it is contrary to that we owe to God. As the Ark was between the Cherubims, so 'tis necessary that God be present between two Hearts that mutually love : This ought to be the Knot of our Loves, that we may render them strong and reasonable. And to say, as that Reverend Bishop who has writ so Divinely on the Love of God ; Love is the more commendable on Earth, by so much as it is the more like that which is between the Wise and Pure Inhabitants of Heaven.

Of the Complaisant, or Pleasing Humour.

IT IS TRUE that there is nothing of more importance than to know the Art to Please, and to make ones self beloved in all Companies: As we have all an Inclination towards Society, we ought to enquire after the means to succeed well in it, and so gain

gain the Affection and Esteem of those we meet, when we are in Conversation or in Business. It is true, that among all the Qualities necessary to this, there is not one that seems more requisite than Complaisance or Courteousness, since without that, all the other are without Gracefulness and are as it were dead. But it is also very certain, that the Use of this is very difficult: Most easily does this offend either in Excess or Defect. If it be not attended with a great deal of Judgment and Discretion, then the Ladies that are too Complaisant pass for Loose or Affected: and if they are not enough so, they shall be thought to be Disdainful or Uncivil: There is not less danger in receiving this, than in giving it. Those Ladies that *render* too much Complaisance, are liable to be troublesome, those that *receive* too much are in danger to be seduced. There are those that will mingle Flattery with Complaisance, to bring them into Error; as Wine is mingled with Poison to draw down the deadly Draught. There is therefore danger lest many should take the Poison for Food, and lest they drink the Flattery while they think themselves receiving only a simple Complaisance. Commonly the one of these is so strictly join'd to the other, that there is need of a great deal of Prudence to be able to separate them. And that we may the better succeed in this, it seems to me convenient to examine, in the first

318 Of Complaisance.

first place, what there is of Good or of Evil in the Complaisant Humour, to the end we may learn, with the better method and the greater facility, wherein the Use of this is allow'd or forbidden to us.

AS THE Complaisance which I must condemn is nothing else but the Art to deceive pleasantly, it must be acknowledged, that the most pernicious of its Effects are, that it makes an appearance pass for truth, and a feigned Friendship for a true one. Those Spirits that are most dissembled, constrain themselves to appear Genuine and Sincere, to the end they may gain the Credit of Confidants and Friends: But it is herein, that their Artifice is discovered; and it comes to be known that they have not that Freedom and Ingenuity they pretend to, so that they over-act their Pretences. As *Patroclos* made use of all the Armour of *Achilles*, and some of his Weapons, yet he would not venture to use his Javelin; because this was of such a sort as that *Achilles* alone was well able to manage it. In like manner, though a dissembled Person does take all the appearances of one that is Vertuous, yet he should not dare to meddle with the pretence of *Franchise* or Ingenuiousness of Temper. This is a quality that cannot possibly sit well upon her, the envious counterfeit *Philiseta* without betraying that she wants it. As the *Compla-*

we take all sorts of Colours from the things they lie upon excepting only the white; so these disguised Souls will take all sorts of hopes, will appear under all forms of Countenance: but after all their Artifice, it will be always observed, That it is impossible to serve themselves well of a pretence to Freedom and Candour. As upon painted Faces we may commonly see both the Paint and the Ugliness too; so we may see at the same time upon the looks that are too Complaisant the plain traces of Dissimulation and Knavery. The Ladies have but too much experience of this; as their Good nature renders them credulous, so it does as often make them miserable. *What a deal of difficulty is there in Complaisance! How much mischief does this carry here against others! There is no Flavour so wicked and ill, with which this evil Complaisance will not vertifie a Sympathy.* They weep with the Unfortunate, they talk ill with the Sland'ers, they laugh with them that are pleased, and rave with the Melancholy. They know how to vilifie Vertue, and to palliate Vice; they have Ointments for all sorts of Wounds, and Paint for all sorts of Faces. To the end they may surprize and impose upon weak minds, they will make show sometimes of reproving severely, but their Censure is healing, not killing; their Counsels have no effect, as they have nothing of Sincerity or Truth:

Truth: To speak of them as they deserve we may say, they resemble much the *Hercules* upon a Theatre, who holds in his Hand a mighty Club, but it is Hollow; It is made but of Past-board and painted Cloth, and may strike a Man without making a Wound, and almost without making it self felt.

Certainly if the Holy Scripture calls the Complaisant Preachers by the name of *Adulterers*, we may say the same of seeming and disguised Friends, who do not speak so as to be useful to us, but only that they may be agreeable; who do not talk to do us a pleasure but to receive one from us.

Let a Man suffer himself to be enchanted as much as he will with the Complaisance of another, and rely upon it, and appear to do so, yet he shall commonly find the Promises false, and the appearances deceitful: Those of this sort who make show of an Affection for all the World, have indeed none for any body. As we see nothing upon the Sepulchers of the greatest Princes, but only Names and meer Titles of their Grandeur: so likewise the Visages of these Persons carry as it were only the empty Names of Friends. And as there is nothing to be found within those Gilded Tombs, but only Dust or Rottiness, so there is nothing but Treachery and Inconstancy under so Complaisant a Mien. Let us elsewhere seek for truth and not please our selves with the embracing of a Phan-

Phantasm. This sort of wits are always somewhat selfish in their Designs, they constantly follow Fortune, and turn about with the Motion of her Wheel. When *Helio-*
philus commanded these fawning Flatterers to be tied to a Wheel and thrown into the Water, he seemed to have a very right Opinion of them, and to have condemned them to a very suitable punishment; in making them to be cast into an Element of which they themselves have the pliability, and in tying them to a Wheel of which they have the Inconstancy. It would be no wrong to them to compare them to the poor baffled *Jaxon*, who believe and rely upon these Comple-
menters; inasmuch as they experience that after all their Promises, if they come to the proof of them, they can find no effect in them, they embrace in them but meer shadows. To embrace a Complaisant Person, is to embrace a Cloud instead of a *Juno*.

HAVING thus taken Notice of a principal Effect of this Humour, let us now observe one of the principal Marks of it. The Complaisant aim at nothing but Ostentation, and Show: And as when we see the most Paint upon a Face, we believe most largely of the Defects of it, judging the height of the Malady by the Quantity of the Physick: In like manner, the more Study and Endeavour, and the more Constraint we perceive in a Person's Actions and Behaviour, we may very well con-

conclude we shall find in the same Proportion that their Designs are wicked; and that the greatest Wickedness often seeks the fairest Mask for it's Disguise. // A Flatterer will make more Offers than a Friend; and the false Amity often glitters more than the true. // The Reason of this is not at all difficult to find. It is because Art is more prodigal than Nature, and Fiction than Truth. // Fiction willingly produces nothing but Appearances; and Truth lays hold of nothing but Substance. Men, as well as Trees, commonly bring forth more Leaves than Fruit; and have a great deal more of Show than Effect. // The Art of Limning and that of Complementing do not much differ from each other; both the one and the other employ themselves only about Colours, and belabour nothing but Surfaces. I do not at all think it strange to see the complaisant Persons prodigal of Complements; a Man will be more liberal of Counters than of Angels; and it costs a great deal less to gild the Statues which are made of Lead or Wood, than to make them of solid Gold. The most beautiful Roses have not the better Smell, they that have so much of Colour have the less of Scent. // Nature herself divides her gifts, and, as if she were covetous or poor and feeble, she seems to find a Difficulty in making the same thing very beautiful and very good. // We may say as much as this concerning the Truth and the

Appearance of Friendship: It is often found that the one is separated from the other, and known that they who show so much Affection upon the Forehead, have sometimes none in the Soul. To speak the truth, they are like those Cushions we lean upon, that are on the out-side some costly Stuff, perhaps, but have nothing within them but only Chaff or Flocks. These are Bats that fly not but in the Twilight, that love neither the Day nor the Night; but a third Season composed of both. They are Peacocks which carry very lovely Feathers, but have the Feet of a Thief, the Head of a Serpent, and the Yellings of the Devils. They are Reeds that comply with every Wind, and accomodate themselves to every Humour, but they grow in the Mud, they are weak and hollow, they break under the Hand that leans upon them, and wound it too.

COMPLAISANCE is not only Excessive, but also Defective too, and in both Cases Degenerates into Flattery. It is Excessive in praising, and Defective in reproving; it speaks either too much or too little; it equally abuses both Discourse and Silence. It is like a Perspective that shows a thing great or little; and sets it as at a distance, or very near, as one will. It ascribes a great deal to the least Vertues; it takes much away from the greatest Crimes; it laughs and it weeps when it pleases; and Aristotle says, it is no less

less excessive in Pretences to pity than to Love. There is no sort of Part but it can act: Now it shall be defending Vice; afterwards it shall be accusing Vertue. One while it gives beautiful Names to things that are most ugly, calling Rashness Courage; Covetousness Thrift and good Huswifry; Impudence a good Humour; and then turning up the reverse of the Medal, it will give the most infamous Titles to that which is highly commendable; calling Eloquence Babling; Modesty Foolishness; and an ingenuous Freedom, Insolence.

It is after this manner that it abuses both Reproofs and Praises, and makes the Laws either severe or favourable as it will. It throws Oil into Fire, it foment and inflames yet more the most debauched Inclinations; it encourages to the committing of evil, those that as yet boggle a little at it; it lets loose the Reins to the most wild Desires, when a just Fear had restrain'd them. It speaks to us as the accursed *Julia* to her Son *Bassianus*: *You can do whatever you will.* This young Emperour being become most monstrously in love with his own Mother, when at a certain time he saw her with her Neck and Breasts uncover'd, and sigh'd in her hearing, without daring to tell the Cause; the Motions of his lascivious Love not having yet entirely stifled those of his Respect and Fear. This complaisant Courtisan took away from him all Apprehension;

She

he hardned him in his Passion instead of re-
proving him: She was not ashamed to have
her own Son her Gallant; and to be Mother
and Mistress to the same Person.

What is there so horrid and impious, but
Complaisance can advise to it? It can dis-
pence with any thing; there are no Passions
so extravagant, but this can breed them in
the Soul, or maintain them there. When
the vile *Myrrha* fell in love with her own Fa-
ther, she found a Complaisance in her Nurse,
who afforded her Means to succeed in her in-
famous Design, instead of diverting her from
it. When *Dido* was passionately in love with
a Stranger, her Sister, too complaisant in the
Case, added to the Flames, instead of striving
to quench them. Complaisance approves all
that which we will, and takes but little care
to perswade, tho' without Eloquence; since
it advises only to that which pleases. The
ills that Concupiscence causes only to bud in
us, Complaisance makes them increase and
bring forth Fruit. If Concupiscence be the
Mother of Wickedness, this is the Nurse of
it; it finishes and exalts that which the other
left but low and beginning.

It finds Excuses for every thing: It said to
the Wretch *Bassianus*, when he was in love
with his Mother; that the Will of Kings
ought to be their only Rule: And they being
above all others, there is no reason they
should be depriv'd of the Pleasures they desire,

by submitting themselves to the forbiddings of another Man. This said to *Myrrha*, that the Gods themselves had no Regard to Nearness of Blood; that *Juno* was the Sister, and Wife of *Jupiter*; and that the Motions of Love do not at all oppose those of Nature. It told *Dido*, that the Dead do not mind at all what the Living do; that there is no Fidelity due to him that is not any longer; and that *Sichæus* was not jealous in his Tomb of that which *Aeneas* might do at *Carthage*. This has in it a readiness to undertake the most horrid Enterprises; this was the Sister of *Dido* that corrupted her; this was the Nurse of *Myrrha*, that led her to the fatal Precipice; this was the Mother of *Bassianus*, that debauch'd her own Son. It encourages those Women that hesitate and tremble; it teaches those that are ignorant; it hardens those that are scrupulous, and fortifies them that are weak.

It is for this Reason, that Complaisance is so well receiv'd when any have ill Designs; because, instead of contradicting or reproving these, it gives the Means to carry them on and accomplish them. It is from hence that the terrible Guards about the Persons of Kings cannot hinder this from entering into Palaces: It is for this that it is every where receiv'd with such a gracious Countenance, and especially in Courts; where there must be nothing used but supple Cringing, and where Licentiousness

Of Complaisance. 227

ness will not be reprov'd. It is lastly for this Reason that the Amorous and the Courtiers strive to keep the Fair, and the Princes in Error, to the end they may maintain themselves in their Favour. Let us not dissemble in this matter, and while we are speaking of this base and cowardly Complaisance, let us not render our selves guilty of the Crime we condemn. The Complaisant, round about a Man that is in favour, are as Shadows about a Body in the Sun-shine. If one removes himself, they are stirr'd with the same Motion; if one sweats, they wipe their Faces; if one be a cold, their Faces are frozen; if we speak, these are but Echo's to repeat our Words. They are Shadows which have no Solidity, and fly from us when we think to lay hold on them; Voices without a Soul, which Interest, and not Truth, drives from the Breasts of Flatterers. How unprofitable to us is such a Complaisance? Have we any Assistance from a Shadow that follows us? Have we any Consolation from an Echo that pities us? But alas, how dangerous is this Complaisance! If you speak Blasphemies, this Echo will answer them; run to any manner of Wickedness, this Shadow will follow you. This Echo repeats the Speeches of the Impious as well as of the Just; and this Shadow follows the Bodies that are Sick as well as those that are sound. Unhappy Compassion! that knows very well how to destroy us in a

228 **Of Complaisance.**

good Fortune, but knows not how to comfort us as it ought under a bad one.

Deceitful Complaisance that stays with us but only while our gaudy Days last, and flies away like the Birds that change their Country when the Winter approaches. May we not after all this say, That Prosperity as well as Adversity, has but few true Friends; since as the one wants them that should comfort it, the other is no less in want of those that should admonish. As the Miserable have none to show them some grounds of Hope; so they that are Happy, are no less destitute of such as should warn them to fear. If Compassion be dumb in the presence of the Afflicted; Complaisance is so in the presence of the Vicious; the one is careful, not to keep at too great distance from a good Fortune; the other sometimes fears to approach an evil one. See here that Complaisance is the Poison of the Great, the Enchantment of the Court, the Enemy of Truth, and Mother of all Vice.

AND NEVERTHELESS, how much Mischief soever it does, we have no small Difficulty to defend our selves from it; it is an agreeable Murderer, the Wounds of it please us, and when it kills we cannot tell how to complain. I grant there are some that have Remedies, as well as *Ulysses*, against this fatal Syren, who smiles to make others weep; and wracks those Vessels that she

Of Complaisance. 229

she has allur'd to her by her Songs; and who appears beautiful, but is indeed a Monster. Certainly if there be some that are Enemies to Complaisance, there are a great many more that suffer themselves to be enchanted with it. If there are some few that resemble *Theodosius* in this, that they are invincible to their Commendations; and that they chuse rather to endure Slander than Flattery: There are many more like *Antipater*, who are willing to dissemble their Imperfections, and will be painted with but half a Face if they want an Eye. There are more that suffer themselves to be catch'd with the Charms of it, than there are, that defend themselves from them. Complaisance is an Enemy that is resisted only by flying from it; it has poison'd Weapons; it needs but to touch that it may Wound, and to come near, that it may conquer us. It has Charms that are of great value, even to the most grave and serious. We cannot repulse them without Regret; we shun it only that it may seek us, and if we refuse it Entrance, 'tis only in jest and pretence; and as to a Mistress, against whom her Lover shuts the Door, only that she may thrust it open. As soon as this has gain'd the Ear it wins the Heart, and to defend our selves from it, we must be either very wise or very insensible. Especially the more it pleases, the more it hurts us; it is by so much the more dangerous, by

how much it is agreeable. It was for this Reason that *Artemidorus* said to his Friends; That there was danger of seeing a Flatterer even in his sleep, and that there can be no safety even with his Shadow or Picture. You may judge from hence of the Malice of this Enemy, since his very Picture is mischievous and deserving our Caution. This is not but too true at this time. We live in an Age wherein Complaisance is more in Vogue, and has more of force than ever. We are in a time when they who know not how to Flatter are accounted Clownish; and those who will not be flattered are esteem'd Dull. At this day they who have not the Art of Flattery know not how to Please. In the present Age as well as in that of *Saint Jerom* they take Flattery for an effect of Humility, or Good-Will; insomuch that they who abandon this shameful Trade, are held for Envious Persons or Proud.

BUT certainly if we examine well those whom Flattery corrupts, we shall commonly find that it has no power at all but upon the smallest Wits. The Pyramids of *Egypt* are said to cast no shadow, notwithstanding that they are very high; and the good Wits will not suffer about them this Complaisance or Flattery. They are no more dazzled with the Rays of Truth than the Eagles are with those of the Sun. *Antisthenes* his Comparison seems to me most admirable, when he said that

the

the Complaisant Persons resemble Courtisans in that they desire all things in their Servants excepting Reason and Prudence. These are things greatly wanting in those who love to Complement, those that have good Judgment abhor such cringing; and the excellent Wits had rather be troublesome than dissembled; and much rather may I say, they had rather be troubled than flattered. Those that are wise are neither willing to be deceiv'd, nor desirous to deceive; they are not willing their Judgment should commit an Error any more than their Will. If we do not see the Artifice of the Complaisant it is our Ignorance, if we do discover this and yet endure it, 'tis an intolerable Ambition. This compliance is proper only to the looser Souls, and freedom is natural to the generous. If the Hypocrite is thought the most guilty of all Sinners, the Flatterer may be deem'd the most pernicious of all Enemies; for as the former would impose upon the Eyes of the All-knowing God; so the latter would also abuse the Eyes of them that are Wise. And as God abhors a false Devotion, so a wise Man ought to detest a false Amity.

BUT IF this Complaisance were not dangerous, yet it is infamous, both in those that receive, and in those that practise it. It is a sign of weakness of Spirit to let it corrupt us; and the Ladies that have a good Judgment cannot be pleased with this fashi-

onable trick, of finding Vices and Vertues where ever one will.

Aristippus said, That the only fruit he had received from his Philosophy was to speak plainly to all the World, and to tell freely his Thoughts of things. The good Minds should have no other aim but this, nor any other sense of things but what they declare; though the Vulgar may perhaps endeavour only to conceal what they think. I esteem very much that other Philosophy which taught the Disciples of it this one thing as conducing enough to a good Life alone, which was, That they should always observe the Sun, to the end they might thereby learn, that, as that Planet scatters even the smallest Mists, so a good Conscience will dissipate all manner of disguise and constraint. All this Artifice is a sign either of Wickedness or Cowardise, and of a Spirit very feeble or very ill disposed. As Prudence and Courage are inseparable, so Policy and Weakness are always together. Reeds yield more to the Winds than Oaks do; and Foxes are more crafty than Lions, the fearful than the generous, and the little Spirits than great ones. The best and wisest Minds ordinarily hate tricks and cheating, and if at any time they make use of Artifice 'tis only as a counter-poison; it is never to do evil but only to avoid it, 'tis not to assault any others, but only to defend themselves. It is one of the most noble effects of Magnanimity
to

Of Complaisance. 233

to love and to hate only openly. Besides, those that are wise must be always equal, but the Complaisant are under a necessity of changing every moment; there is nothing certain or steady in their Humour, any more than in their looks, because that as well as the other depends upon the Humour of the Person they would please. They are forced sometimes to condemn in the same hour that which they have before commended, or to extol to the Skies the same thing which they had before damned to the bottomless Pit. Complaisance then has commonly attending upon it these two shameful qualities, Cowardise, and Inequality or Unconstancy.

I speak nothing in all this but what the Complaisant themselves will own; and so those that are most expert at this Trade will not address themselves to any but the untought, and meaner Wits: They are like those Mountebanks that produce their sorry Medicines only before the Ignorant Vulgar. They that have but a small measure of Knowledge can lift up the Mask and deride the Cheat; they will more regard what these Persons are in effect, than what they are in the Opinion of others. And if we understand this matter rightly, we shall know it is from hence that they who mightily love themselves do also love those that flatter them; for it is very seldom that we can find together much knowledge and a great admiration

admiration of our selves. They that well know themselves and what they are, will give no heed to the Complements, that ascribe to them what they are not. They therefore that Idolize their own Opinions have an Aversion for all those that contradict them: They, like *Ahab*, love none but the fawning Prophets, and they care not if one does deceive them, provided he flatter too.

Certainly there are too many of the Ladies like *Jezebel* in her Hatred of *Elijah*, I mean that hate those who reprehend their faults; like the Apes that endeavour to break the Looking-glasses wherein they see themselves, because these discover their Ugliness. Nevertheless I wish they could understand, that a good Admonition, or a Reproof well given, is of much more advantage to them (as *Solomon* says) than the most costly Pendants at the Ears. I confess, that when ever a Reproof is given, it should be softened as much as is possible that it may not give the receiver too much pain: But yet it must be said, That if there be some smart in it, the Ladies ought to resolve that they will endure it, since it may be useful to them, and serving to their Honour; and a seasonable Correction may contribute more to the ornament of the Mind than Jewels at the Ears can do to the adorning of the Face. But on the other side, if any do so love and admire themselves as that they cannot bear the truth when it shows them
their

their defects, such a Humour shall easily be conquered by Complaisance. As they make it a very easie and short Work to a Besieger who give up the place they ought to defend, so it is not difficult to conquer that Person by Flattery whose self-love betrays him. Complaisance has no difficulty to surprise our Minds when it has an intelligencer within us of this foolish self-admiring humour. It is like those Thieves that have their correspondents in the House they design to Rob that shall open the Doors for them in the Night when People have no thoughts of defending themselves. As when *Eve* was gain'd, *Adam* himself follow'd soon after; so when the Inclination is corrupted by Flattery the Mind is not long before it yields. This Comparison seems not to be much amiss, since the Complaisant have the shifting Tricks of the Serpent as well as his Poison, and easily slide themselves quite in there, where the least part of them is admitted; and in that they accost our humour to debauch our Reason, and make the former present the Apple to the latter.

They therefore that perceive that their good-nature carriesthem to the Love of Complaisance, ought to be always upon their guard: They must never be drowsie or careless least the Flatterer like the Serpent should seduce this *Eve*. It is in this Case that the Ladies are in a great deal of danger, if they do

do not take good notice, that Complaisance will show them such Fruits as promise Life, but will give them Death. Certainly they ought to consider well this Example, wherein they may see how much mischief this thing did to the first Woman, in giving her Courage to Sin, in permitting her that which God had forbidden her. Those of her Sex ought to remember that they have Enemies that flatter, to destroy them, and accommodate themselves to their humour that they may ensnare their Judgment.

IN MY OPINION it were an excellent remedy against the mischief of this, for the Women to consider seriously what they are when any praise them for that they are not. To judge whether these Painters have drawn our Picture true, we must confront the Copy and Original, and observe whether the Pourtraicture drawn for us be according to our Nature. There is nothing so contrary to Complaisance as Conscience: this does very often condemn us even while that is commending. But as the Slanders of the Malicious do not hinder but that we may be very good; so notwithstanding the Applauses of Flatterers we may be very blameworthy. Complaisance then is the Capital Enemy of Conscience, it would extinguish this Divine Light, it would lull this careful Sentinel asleep, it would silence this inward Monitor which ought to have a constant

stant liberty to speak to us, and who lashes us with remorse if we deserve it, while the Complaisant are flattering us with Praises.

What is there then in Society so pernicious as this? when it hinders us from acknowledging our faults, and would have us continue in them and make our errors the Discourse of the World. It is for this reason better that we undergo Censure than Complaisance; because it is less dangerous to be accused than praised falsely: The Wounds of a Friend are of more worth than the Kisses which a Flatterer gives us. If we must needs commit an Error, and take our selves to be what we are not in truth, it is better far to have too bad an Opinion of our selves to the end we may be humbled thereby, than to flatter our selves into an Opinion of more worth than we have. It is less dangerous to fly from a Shadow than to let an Enemy come within reach of us: it is better to fear an apparent evil than not to fear a true one; our fear is herein much less dangerous than our boldness.

I T I S T R U E that Slander and Flattery do both equally make War against Vertue, but as the one assaults it with a Sword, the other does this with Poison: for which reason they ought to have more fear of Flatterers than of the Slanderers; as they would more industriously shun those Enemies who hide their designs than those that openly make their War. But let us see what in the end becomes of the Complaisant,

Complaisant, with all their falshood, with all their disguise and dawbing. As soon as their Artifice is discovered, they are held in abhorrence, they remain ever after suspected by all the World; they are never lov'd any longer than till they are known. And, to say the truth, the content which Complaisance affords, and the distast that is ever caused by a freedom, are both equal, but of short continuance. At first the Candid and Sincere are repulsed, and the Complaisant are approv'd, but experience changes the Sentiment: and Complaisance at the end gains the same Aversion which the freedom met at the beginning. As Solomon says, *He that rebuketh a man, afterwards findeth more favour than he that flattereth with his tongue.* The one begins with a short sweetness, to end in a long distaste and bitterness; and the other begins with a slight disgust, but 'tis to continue in a satisfaction the more solid and durable. The one is like a Medicine which does not distaste us but to give us Health, the other like a Poison which is sweetned that it may kill. Hence it comes to pass that herein Complaisance has effects quite contrary to those of the truth that corrects us: In that all the World esteem and seek this truth before it appears, and when they see it, it makes their Eyes smart, and offends. On the contrary, all the World blames the Compliance of Flatterers, but when it comes near it pleases and bewitches us.

We

We cannot hate the latter nor love the former, but only during their absence from us.

NOW THAT WE HAVE THUS SEEN what there is of Evil in Complaisance, let us next examine what it has of Goodness or Usefulness in it. Whatever some may say of this, it may be as far distant from Flattery, as Prudence is from Craft, and Courage from Rashness. And if it should be said that at least it is very difficult not to run out of one into the other, this were to deceive ones self as much as if we should think that a Person cannot be Liberal unless he be Prodigal, or that we cannot possibly separate a Mediocrity from an Excess.

I readily own there is often a Compliance that is base; as when *Cynetus* commended *Demetrius Phalerensis* for that he kept time in spitting when he was troubled with a Cough. I own that the Flatterers may abuse this excellent Vertue, but what one is there that they do not abuse? What is there so Beautiful or Divine, as that the Ignorant or the Wicked cannot prophane it? May they not even do ill with truth? Those that boast themselves of a good Action they have done are not they guilty of Vanity though they tell no lye in the case? We ought not therefore to condemn Complaisance, for that there are many that do not know the right use of it. It is extremely good in its nature, though commonly it is very bad in mens practice and use of it.

Q. 11

And

And that this may the better appear, is it not true that this great freedom which many praise does very often proceed not from an Integrity of Manners in the Man's own self, but from Conceitedness rather, and from Vanity and Imprudence. We take pleasure to contradict sometimes, because the fear of being overcome makes us loth to confess even the truth it self. Nevertheless though I should grant that this sharp reprehending humour does not come from a bad Principle, yet at least it must be said of it, That 'tis a bad effect of a good Cause. Those that are so rude and uncomplaisant are Objects of Compassion, though they be Learned and Vertuous. One may say of them what *Plato* said of *Xenocrates*, That notwithstanding his Knowledge and his Honesty, he had need to sacrifice to the Graces. If this rudeness be unbecoming a Philosopher, how shall it be commendable in a Lady? As gentle sweetness is natural to their Sex, so Complaisance ought to be inseparable from their Actions and Discourse. 'Tis true I do not approve of that which appears affected and constrained when it endeavours to Please: but also I cannot excuse those Women that put on so much Gravity as to become Morose. Sweetness and Severity are not contrary, but only different things; and Prudence may put them into so perfect a Temperament, that the one may give Lustre to the other.

Also

Of Complaisance. 241

Also I do not mean, that to render themselves Complaisant, they should universally approve all things; these are two extreams equally blamable; to take upon one to complement or contradict indifferently in all sorts of Rencontres. Those Spirits that contradict every thing, are sower or presumptuous; those that approve of all, are ignorant or cowardly. Those Women that make Profession of Contradicting all things, do this either out of Inclination, or with Artifice: if this be from Inclination, it shows the ruggedness of their Humour; if from Artifice, they are vainly proud of a little Wit. Certainly let it proceed from what it will, it cannot always succeed, it is always joyn'd with a vicious Temperament, or an imprudent Design; and is in Persons ill born, or ill instructed.

How troublesome are these Women in Conversation! If they did but regard the publick Good so much as they do their own private Satisfaction, they would vow an eternal Solitude and Retirement; and would never show themselves but when People wanted Mortification. Let us do what we will, or forbear to do, 'tis impossible to content them. If the Company do not agree to their Sentiment, they are vexed; if they follow their Opinion, then they themselves begin to have another quite contrary, on purpose that they may contradict without end. If any others

R

com-

commend a Vertue, they will detract and condemn it. If any condemn a Vice, it is presently their Part in the Scene, to excuse or defend it. They value and mind not what their Opinion is of any thing, provided it be contrary to that of others. If you praise them, they will accuse you of Flattery; if you do not commend them, they will condemn you for ungrateful; if one speaks before them, one is a Babler; if one does not speak, he is disdainful. They will find something to blame, both in our Discourse, or in Silence; they will condemn both Conversation and Solitude.

To speak rightly of this Matter; we must say that the Women of this Humour are almost always proud there, where the Complaisant are commonly humble: For, to describe a true Complaisance rightly, we must say 'tis nothing but a patient Civility, or a civil Charity. As the Love which Christianity teaches, endures all things; so the Complaisance of Morality, after a sort, does as much: although the Motives of these are different, in that the one proceeds from a Desire to please God, the other from a Desire to please Men. After all, we should find it no difficult thing to be complaisant, and to bear with the Infirmities and Imperfections of others; if we would but consider, that we do no more herein than what we often have need of for our selves. But this is the Unhappi-
ness

ness of some, that they can neither show Mercy to others, nor suffer that any others should do Justice to them, or use them as they herein do deserve.

Those Women that have not so much Complaisance as to bear with the least Faults, have neither the Humility to endure that any one should reprove their greatest Crimes. They believe others will always abuse Reproof as themselves do ; and that it will not be used to instruct, but to injure. They despise the Opinion of all the World, and would have all Men adore theirs : They are as well Impatient as Insolent ; and have as much Vanity as Rudeness. And if at last either their Ignorance or the Evidence of Truth obliges them to consent, or hold their Peace, yet their Mien and Looks contradict still : and after that their Mouth has made a Peace, their silence still continues the War. What can there be more troublesome in Conversation than this Humour ? Certainly this Quarrelsome Temper were much better in the Schools than in Conversation. I do not at all deny but we may sometimes reason and argue together, the better to find out truth ; and that we may render Discourse the more agreeable by the diversity of the Subjects that are spoken upon : But yet there should be some fear and caution lest we be disordered or fall out : At least it should be always remembered that Dispute in Conversation is a

244 Of Complaisance.

War where we ought not to combat with Obstinacy, nor to overcome with Insolence. Provided Complaisance be mingled with the Debates, there is nothing so agreeable, and there will no more injury be done by a Disputation of that sort, than two Persons would do by throwing Flowers at each other.

The same that have the Humour of Contradicting, have also a perpetual Inclination to Correct, and reform all Matters: but they are as unprofitable as troublesome; they know not how to testifie a Good-will in their reproofs, no more than a good Spirit in their Disputes. All that which comes from their harsh Humour is displeasing; though they speak that which is true they do it so ungracefully, that instead of making People good, they make them their Enemies. As soon as such Persons are seen they are distasted; after that we have an aversion for them, at last an abhorrence: they are generally the Objects either of Hatred or Laughter.

Complaisance succeeds much better, since as it commends without Flattery, so it reproofs without Injury. This knows the Art of curing pleasantly, it takes from the Medicine its bitterness without robbing it of its strength: It is a Sun that does not diminish his Light to make it the more tolerable to sore Eyes; it refrains from dazling with its Beams, but not from enlightning. If the Load-stone has not only the Vertue to attract
Iron,

Of Complaisance. 245

Iron, but also to show the Pole, Complaisance Charms the greatest Spirits, as well as the small ones.

It enlightens those that have Eyes, and attracts those that have none ; They who know and understand it see its force, they that do not, yet feel it. In truth, it has a secret Vertue for the conquering of Hearts, it is a Loadstone that draws even Iron, I mean the most Clownish and Barbarous.

It insensibly wins upon us even when it improves : it does not fall with an impetuous violence like Hail, but as gently as Snow. Though the Snow be cold, yet it wraps up the Earth as in a Mantle of Wool (to which the Holy Ghost compares it) to the end it may cherish and keep warm the Seed that is in it. In like manner though Reproof be in it self somewhat disagreeing, yet it fails not to make good Designs and vertuous Undertakings bud and sprout in our Hearts. Complaisance obliges while it reprehends. And if this strikes it is but with a Rod of Roses ; where it strikes it leaves a Flower instead of a Wound. Without this the best Advice seems but a Reproach ; without it, Correction is Injurious, Praise is disagreeable, and Conversation troublesome.

Complaisance is not a blind Vertue, it has Eyes as well as Hands, it does not strike blindfold : There are some faults it reproveth, and some it bears with : it endures what it cannot

hinder and prevent. And in truth, excepting the brotherly Correction to which Christianity obliges us, what matter is it to us if many Erre, or if they have ill Opinions, unless it be in matters of Conscience or that concern their Salvation? As we do not undertake to heal all that are Sick, we are not bound to endeavour the undeceiving of all those that are in Error. We should have no less trouble and difficulty in becoming the Correctors of all the ill Opinions in the World, than if we should go about to heal all the Distempers that are in it. We have not this in charge, this care appertains to the Providence of God and not to us.

Besides what need is there that we should speak all our Sentiments, or make known every where all that which displeases or contents us? One that is wise ought well to consider always that which he says, but he is never bound to say all that he thinks. There is no need that for the avoiding of a lye, he should fall into Indiscretion. To be free, he does not need to be Uncivil; we do not injure Truth every time that we do not speak it. We are always forbidden to say that which is false, but we are not commanded to say always all that is true. There is no Law that obliges us to speak all our Sentiments, or to discover all our Thoughts.

On the other side, this great liberty of speaking is not only-unjust or troublesome, but also dangerous ; this Imprudent plainness provokes the most mild Persons, when the true Complaisance would soften the most rugged. *Clytus* lost the love of *Alexander* by speaking too freely. *Scipio* won the Heart of *Syphax* by having treated him with gentleness: The one by Complaisance preserved his Life in company of a *Barbarian* ; the other by using an indiscreet freedom lost his by an intimate Friend. Daily experience affords us examples enough of this sort, so that we need not seek for them in the Histories of past Ages : we sufficiently find every day, that without Complaisance, we become odious, and intolerable to all the World. Where there is no Complaisance there can be no Civility, and without these two lovely Qualities, Society cannot be but very troublesome. Especially let the Ladies observe, that as their Faces cannot please without Beauty, so neither can their Conversation without Complaisance.

BUT THAT WE may say what yet further concerns them: After we have seen how Complaisance ought to be practised, let us now take notice how they should receive it. Let us learn the difference there is between a Complaisant Person and a Flatterer, for fear the Ladies should take the one for the other. The Example of *Panthea* seems to me sufficiently famous to make a good Discovery of

248 Of Complaisance.

this. This Lady was no less Modest than Fair; she despised praises as much she deserv'd them. * *Lucian* describing the Perfections of her Wit and her Face, compared her to the *Minerva* of *Phidias*, and the *Venus* of *Praxiteles*. *Panthea* would not accept of the praises that seem'd to her excessive, nor endure that they should compare her to the Goddesses. *Lucian* to give an answer to this, and to justify the Comparison he had made, shows, in a very few words, the difference that there is between the praises of an Orator and those of a Flatterer.

We ought not (says he) when we would praise a thing, to compare it to that which is below it, for this were to abate the merit of it: nor to that which is its equal, for that were to do no more than if it were compared with its self: But the Comparison ought to be made with something that is more excellent, to the end that what we praise may have the more of brightness and lustre. A Hunter (says he) will not compare a good stout Dog to a Fox, when he would commend him, because this were too mean a Comparison; nor to a Wolf, because this is a thing too like him: but rather to a Lion who has more of Force and Courage. If Praises are without Foundation they are Flatteries: If they are without Ornament, they are injurious. Those who can join Ornament with merit in doing this are just and allowable in what they do.

It

Of Complaisance. 249

It were Flattery to praise one that is crooked for her fine Shapes, or one that is bald for the fine Hair she has. It may be seen according to this reasoning of *Lucian*, That in prailing what is little may be elevated to indifferent, and what is indifferent to excellent. A commendation ought not to lye, but it may amplifie: It ought not to be prodigal, but may be liberal. There is a great difference between a meer History and a Panegyrick; it is not enough for this latter that it do barely describe, but it ought likewise to carry in it some Ornament and Pomp.

The Ladies may judge from hence that there is more difference between praising and flattering, than there is between dressing and painting the Face. We may plainly see in the example of this Orator, how praises ought to be given; and in the example of that Lady we may see how they should be received. *Lucian* shows that he understood well the Laws of his Rhetorick, and *Panthea* testified, That she was not ignorant of those of Decency and Modesty. I grant there are very few that like her do make a Conscience of receiving the praises that are given them, though they be entirely excessive. I know that the vanity of many is no less Sacrilegious than Sawcey, when they receive from their Idolaters the names of Angels and Divinities without any Scruple: I know too, and grant that there is more occasion to exhort to restraint than to liberty

liberty in this matter. Nevertheless they ought to consider that they must not violate the Laws of Decency in observing those of Modesty. It is necessary that Prudence should show them a certain way between Insolence and Incivility. If Christianity does oblige them to despise all sorts of praises and even those that are most just, nevertheless it is convenient sometimes that Complaisance do approve these praises in the Countenance, even when Humility does despise them in the Soul. Herein they owe always their Conscience to God, and sometimes their Mien to the World and Custom.

But to finish this Discourse on that part which is of greatest importance : If they perceive themselves moved with the praises that are given them, they have no more to do but to look into themselves, that so they may find a remedy for this in their own Conscience. As we are the less afflicted when we know the ill imputed to us to be false ; so we shall be the less proud for our Commendations, when we find that the good ascribed to us is not truly in us. We must therefore defend our selves from Flattery as from Slander, by the knowledge of our selves. For as Conscience may comfort us against false accusations by showing us our Innocence : so it may humble us, while we are flattered, by showing us our Defects. And if it be not enough for this purpose to consider our own Imperfections,

let

Of Complaisance. 251

let us consider moreover how much Treachery and Deceit there is in others! How much Falshood there is mingled with the Affairs of the World! They who have the looks of admirers, have sometimes the Hearts of Murderers; oftentimes they who praise us in their Discourse, disparage us in their Thoughts.

The Ladies, like the *Enrydice* of the Poets, are liable to find Serpents under the Flowers; As their Sex is carried naturally to Gentleness, their Enemies put Poison in what they love, and lay Snares where they are sure they will pass. The Flatterers would do them less harm, if they would take more heed to the Designs of such Men than to their Discourses: They would the better know those who disguise the truth if they would represent to themselves that there are three Conditions necessary to the speaking well; that there must be Resolution, Prudence, and Friendship. When Resolution is wanting, they will palliate and dawb: when Prudence and Amity are absent, they are Injurious. The Cowardly Spirits dare not speak; the Imprudent know not how to do it; and Enemies will not. Lastly, That they may give and receive Complaisance the more Innocently, she that is wise must consider, that this is in all those cases forbidden, wherein we have more care to please Men than God. It ought to be consider'd, that oftentimes the Righteous God condemns those Actions that Men praise;
and

and that he who entertains Flatterers to exalt and puff him up, while God threatens him in this World, shall not have them to defend him when God shall condemn him in the other.

Of Birth or Nature, and Education.

I OWN that *Plato* had good Reason to say that three of the happiest and most necessary Principles in the World, are Nature, Fortune, and Art: Since Nature gives Life; Fortune, Goods; and Art, Knowledge. I own too, that Nature and Art have sometimes no lustre without the Goods of Fortune; and this serves like a Theatre or Ornament to the other two. But certainly I cannot approve that Opinion of the Philosopher, when he said, That the greater things are done by Nature, and by Fortune; and the lesser by Art. Nature makes Men; Art can make but the Pictures of them; Fortune gives Sceptres; and Art can give but Talk and Science. *Plato* seems to me more the Humane than the Divine in this Opinion: The Works of Art are so pretious, that Nature and Fortune have need of them in all that which they do, that is most admirable: The one
and

and the other is blind, if Art does not open their Eyes: Without Art, no one can well live or reign. How many great Fortunes do we see overthrown for want of Conduct? How many do we see, whose good Parts lie barren for want of Education? I shall not speak here of what Fortune can do; but only of Nature and Art, or rather of Birth and Education, that it may be seen, which of these two ought to have the greater part in the Lives and Actions of the Ladies.

IT SEEMS in the first place, that a good Birth is more requisite to them than any other thing; since, with this Advantage, they do that which is good, as it were naturally, and without Difficulty. An happy Nature has no more need of Rules than a good Constitution of Medicines: A good Birth succeeds better without Education, than an ill one can with the best Education. As there is not the least Star in the Sky, but is of far greater worth, and has more of Force than the most glorious Sun in a Picture: So it must be acknowledged that the Advantages which Nature gives are none of them so little; but that they deserve more Esteem than all that can be acquir'd by Art and Study. An endeavour'd Gracefulness must yield as much to a natural one, as a painted thing to a living one. And if the Ladies were all assembled before a Judge, as heretofore the three Goddesses were before *Paris*, I believe he would
give

give the same Judgment that *Paris* did, and that he would declare the more naked, I mean the more native, to be the fairest.

Tho' a Face be not adorn'd, we may see Beauty in it, if it be there; so tho' good natural Parts are not cultivated, yet they will make their Strength and Excellency to be observ'd. Suppose Pearls be cast into the Mud, we may yet see something of their Lustre, even in the middle of the Filth; and tho' a Person that has good natural Parts be brought up in Obscurity; yet her good Birth will always dart out some Rays, and make some Signs of Vertue shine in her Looks. Those Women that have this Advantage do all things with the better Grace, and succeed with more Equality in all their Enterprises.

The Vertues to which we have an Inclination endure much better than those to which we have none. We entertain more easily that which is in us by Birth, than what we have by Art and Endeavour. Nature herein resembles Step-Mothers, who always take more care of the Children which themselves have brought forth, than of those of another Woman: She does as the Earth, which better cherishes those Plants and Flowers that its self produces, than those which the Husbandman or Gardener sows in it. The Effects of Nature are like those Streams that run of themselves, without any Labour about them

them to make them pass along: But the Effects of Art are like those Pipes that belong to Fountains which are always wanting something or other to be done to them. That which comes from Nature is the more equal and the more assur'd.

And if there may be many found, who love rather to follow their Nature, than to renounce it for the Affectation of somewhat else, tho' it may seem better: I think their Opinion is very reasonable; for in truth, we shall succeed better in cultivating that which is indifferent in our selves, than in imitating that which is excellent in others. If *David* fought better with his Sling, than he could have done with the Weapons of *Saul*, and struck his blow surer with the Equipage of a Shepherd than with that of a Warriour: So likewise we may do more with Nature on our side, than with all the Endeavour in the World; if the exactest Method, and the most pompous Style do not suit with our Temper.

How superfluous and unprofitable is that Labour, that would acquire a Perfection which is contrary to our Humour, when that which is but indifferent is not worth our Imitation; and that which is excellent is above it? That which is most excellent in all things, is what cannot be acquir'd by Art. As for Eloquence, who can acquire the Vigour of it? As for Disputing, who can acquire the Subtilty, and readiness

diness necessary to it? As for a good Grace, who could ever acquire that native and powerful Charm, which Painters know not how to draw, nor the Poets to describe; and which is felt much better than it can be express'd?

Besides, what need is there to light up Torches when we have the Sun shining upon us? And what need to receive the Light of Art, when we have that of Nature? This is not only superfluous, but also shameful and more difficult. And in truth, whatever good Rules, or whatever fine Examples we follow; there is sometimes more Difficulty to do as another does, than to do more; it is less hard to surpass than just to equal them; because it may be, to do more there needs nothing but Force or Courage; but to do just so much, there must be Measure and Proportion. It may be much easier to out-go a Man by running, than if we are confin'd to that sort of Pace which he uses; since in the former Case we depend upon our selves; but in the latter we must regulate our going by his.

Would there not in this be a great deal of Constraint and Weariness? Would it not then be better to follow our own Humour, provided it be not contrary to Reason? Were it not best for us to examine our Temperament, and be guided by that to chuse the Perfection we endeavour; as men regard the Nature of the Mold in which they plant their Trees or sow their Seeds? Certainly, whatever they say of
Art,

Art it is nothing but a Labyrinth that confounds us: We ought to take wing and fly up above it rather than vex our selves with searching the way out among so many windings, where vulgar Souls are wont to lose themselves. It is true that excellent Wits as well as the Birds may sometimes walk in Paths; but also they sometimes fly up above all; they use their Wings as well as their Feet; they follow the force of their Genius as well as the Rules that Art prescribes.

If we did but well know how to discover the force of our Temper, we should have it less difficult to succeed in any thing we had a mind to undertake. When we renounce our own humour to imitate that of another, we resemble them who forsake a good Patrimony to go and seek their Fortune: We do like *Mark Antony*, who might have lov'd a most excellent Beauty in *Rome*, and yet he went as far as *Egypt* to seek one far inferiour. Certainly to renounce our own humour that we may take up another, is like the leaving an *Othello* for a *Cleopatra*; it is to despise what is our own, as that *Roman* Prince did, though it be very excellent; to love a strange thing though that be but indifferent. Let the Ladies take notice, That they shall much better succeed in all that they do or forbear, if they know how to discover and learn the excellency or worth of their Temperament.

Here is the source of the greatest disorders, While we are ignorant of what Nature can do, we would fain be acquiring what it cannot. A chearful humour would fain affect the Gravity of the Melancholick, and the Melancholick would affect the Vigour and Fierceness of the Cholerick. Instead of finding out what there is of good in our Humour, we quit it whole, and go out of our selves to follow an example that is inconvenient to us, and that hinders the raising our selves to any higher point of Perfection. If we could but observe the Seeds of Vertue that Nature has scattered in us, we might, without doubt, render our selves the more perfect, and the more happy. We should become the more perfect, because we should have less labour to acquire a perfection conform to our Humour : and we should be the happier, because our Actions would be without constraint, and we should employ none but suitable and agreeable means for the attaining that Felicity.

But it is an Unhappiness (says Cicero) that we suck in error as it were with our Milk. That we may obey Custom, Truth must give place to Vanity, and Nature to Opinion. We are so confounded in the Variety of Opinions, and Impressions that they give us from the Cradle, that we cannot retrieve our selves even when we are at an Age sufficient for the making this Reflection. We are Ignorant of the Capacity of our own
Genius,

Genius, and take more notice of what others do than of what we our selves are able to do. In this we are like those unnatural Mothers that caress and show kindness more to the Children of others than their own, and love better an adopted Child than one born by themselves. This is from want of considering that if we would go where Nature calls us, we should more often come near to perfection and happiness; and from the want of considering too, that whatever we do which is contrary to our Humour, it can have neither Freedom, nor a good Grace.

I DENY NOT for all this but there are bad Inclinations: and there is often that which needs reforming in our Humour; but we have herein great Evidence of the Power of Nature, in that 'tis so difficult a thing to correct the Defects of our Temperament, or to overcome the Vices we are naturally addicted to. And this is not only true of particular Persons, but also of whole Nations. There are Vices naturaliz'd to Countries, so as that they cannot be rooted out but with a great deal of difficulty and labour. Let us do what we can we shall never get a perfect Victory over natural Inclinations. If this Man be a lover of Learning he reads Books to the point of Death: If the other be born with the Gift of Rallery, he jests even to the last moment of his Life.

To have a desire to conquer entirely ones Nature, is as if a Man would fain leap away from his Shadow, or be separated from himself. We may mortifie our natural Passions, but we can never utterly kill them; we may hinder them from domineering, but we cannot hinder them from rebelling. If they are ruled, yet they will be troublesome; we may stop and restrain their course for a little while, but afterwards they will break out like an Impetuous Torrent, and carry away all that stands in their way. At the beginning *Nero* could be wise for a few Years, but at last, the Conduct of *Seneca* must give place to his Temper, and the Person he acted be changed for the Person he was.

We return to our selves: There will always something of our Humour escape us, notwithstanding the Efforts of Reason or the Precepts of Philosophy. If our ill-nature does continue tamed for a while; yet it will do at length like the Bear in *Martial* that fell upon his Master and devoured him, even after he had been tamed many Years. How strange are the Effects of Nature! There are some who perhaps show not the Vices of their Temper but towards the end of their Days. *Pliny* had reason to say, That as among the *Indians* there are some Countries where the Hair of the People is white while they are young, and grows black with Age: so we see some Persons that are much restrained

strained and well governed while they are young, who in a riper Age give themselves to nothing else but Sports and Liberty and Debauchery. There were in them the Seeds of Evil that did not sprout nor put forth till the Autumn of their Lives.

Nature will have always its Course, and what Education soever may be employ'd to correct it, yet in the end it will make appear what of Good or Evil it has in it. There is an instance sufficiently famous among the Ladies to demonstrate this, that is, in the two Daughters of *Augustus*: They were both brought up in the same Court, they had the same Instructions, and the same Examples, and nevertheless *Livia* never cared for any but Licentious Company; and *Julia* always loved the Conversation of such as were sober and wise. They were seen at the publick Shows, the one surrounded with Lewd Courtiers, the other with Philosophers. Tho these Princesses had the same Education, yet they were very different in their Course of Life; and while they both follow'd their Inclination, the one was Vertuous, the other Debauched. Thus we see what a good or bad Nature can do: Let us now observe how absolutely necessary it is to have a good Education.

WHATEVER IS said in favour of Nature or Birth it still seems to me that Education is yet more requisite. The former

depends upon Chance, and the other upon our Endeavour. Education is necessary to all sorts of Persons. It makes those Women that have a good Temperament become the more perfect, and those who have a bad one, it renders the less insupportable. It gives Lustre to the one sort, and repairs in some measure the Defects of the other. As Lead was more valuable when form'd by the Art of that Excellent Statuary *Phidias*, than an unshapen Lump of Gold ; so an indifferent Nature will succeed better with an excellent Education, than an excellent Nature with an ill Education.

We have mentioned in the beginning of this Discourse the Three Principles of *Plato*, but here we must place the Three Principles of *Plutarch*. We can do nothing with any Perfection (said he) in Vertue or in the Sciences without Nature, Knowledge and Use. Nature gives the Capacity, Reason shows the Rules, and Use gives us Exercise for the acquiring a readiness and habit. Knowledge without Nature is rude, and Nature without Knowledge is blind ; but both the one and the other is still imperfect without Experience. We may see then how necessary Education is, since it includes Art and Experience ; and in that it polishes and compleats what Nature had but begun. If Nature gives Matter, it is Education that gives Form and Beauty.

It is for this reason that our Ancestors were of Opinion, we are indebted but little less to those that teach than to those that have begotten us; since if the latter have given us Life, the other give us Knowledge, without which Life would be but troublesome and unpleasant. It was for this reason that the *Lacedemonians* chose one of the wisest and most able Persons among their Magistrates for the Instructing, and bringing up of their Children. It was for this reason that *Eteocles* would needs have old Men given in Hostage to *Antipater* rather than young Persons, fearing least their youth might be corrupted in a Foreign Country. It was lastly for this Reason the *Pythagoreans* were wont to say, That the Education of Children is the Foundation of Common-wealths.

And in truth they were not in the wrong, when they believed that the Happiness of Estates and Provinces depends much upon the good Education of Children; for 'tis no easie matter to retain the People in due Subjection when they are brought up with Principles of Rebellion. Moreover, Nature only gives us a sense of private good and advantage, but Education teaches us the sense we ought to have of the Publick Interests. Nature carries us to Liberty, but Education keeps us within our Duty.

Good Education then is altogether necessary to both Sexes, whatever good Fortune they have in their Birth: How good soever the Mold is, yet there must be an Husbandman and there must be Seed to make it bring forth a Crop of Corn; so though our Nature be excellent in its self, there must be added moreover good Instructions and good Examples for the making it bring forth good Fruits: I may well say further, That as the best Mold bears nothing but Briers if it be not cultivated, so the best Natural Parts produce but very ill things if they are left without Discipline. Nature employs all her force towards ill things, it is necessary then that we retrench our Inclinations, as the superfluous Branches of Trees are pruned away, that so the Sap may be all spent upon those which must bear Fruit. I confess that we must sometimes have regard to temper, for that as every sort of Land will not bear every sort of Seed, so every Humour is not capable of all sorts of Impressions. If Nature without Art has no certainty; Art without Nature has no strength nor sweetness: It must needs be then that in this case the Form must have Matter to sustain it, and the Accident must support it self by some Substance.

I CONFESS that Nature is somewhat necessary to our succeeding well, but it must also be owned that it may be constrain'd; and that

that there is no less labour necessary to the excellling in a Vertue to which we have an Inclination, than for that to which we have none at all. In truth this Point of Morality is not less agreeable than necessary. That we may not abuse our selves then in this matter, it is convenient to observe that Nature does not give us an Inclination to Vertue so much as to the extreams about it. It mounts to an Excess or falls even to Defect, if it be not fastened in the point of Mediocrity by the means of Education and Art. Nature needs either a Bridle or Spur, it either freezes or burns, it passes from one extreame to another, if Education does not show it the Middle where Vertue dwells.

Upon the whole, when Nature carries us to any excess, as to Rashness or Prodigality, we are thought to have an Inclination to some Vertue there, where in truth we do only incline to a Vice. It is for this reason that Morality has much more difficulty to cure the Distempers of the Soul, than Medicine has to heal those of the Body. Physick hardly heals those Distempers that proceed from Want, and Morality can hardly conquer those which proceed from Abundance. Physick more easily retrenches what is superfluous, than it can repair what is wanting; Morality does more easily repair than retrench.

So much truth there is in this, that we have sometimes most difficulty to do well even on that side to which our Inclination most carries us. It is harder for a Prodigal Person to become rightly liberal than for one that is covetous. It is more easie to raise a Defect up to a Mediocrity than to bring an Excess down to it. Behold the reason of this: It is because the Excess allures us with more of Pleasure than the Defect; and though the two Extreams are equally Vicious, nevertheless we carry our selves more freely to that which is excessive than to that which is defective. We rather chuse what is too much than what is too little: We love to be swoln and puffed up with Fat, even till we grow unwieldy, rather than to be meagre and lean: It seems to us as if there were more Courage and Excuse for Transgressing by Prodigality than by Avarice, and by Rashness than Fearfulness.

It is certain then that Nature gives us nothing of Regular; it only makes us Prodigal, or Rash; it is only Art or Education that can teach us how we must govern our selves to be rightly liberal or courageous. It is not difficult to judge from hence that they who seem to have the best Nature, have need of the best Education, to the end they may retrench or regulate that which Nature has given them. Let us declare the truth: A Lady born with the faculty of
Speaking

Speaking readily, will, without Education, become a meer Tatler: A serious Humour will become Morose; A Prudent Wit will grow crafty and deceitful. Nature wanders if we do not conduct and guide it; even the force and vigour of it becomes prejudicial, if we have not Art and Light for it to make use of.

BUT IF I suppose all that which I have been last speaking may be false, and that it is more easie to become exactly Vertuous in that to which we incline than in that which we do not incline to, what praise then would be merited hereby? What great matter is it for a Man to be good, when he cannot be bad? What honour can we pretend to deserve in being Vertuous there where we cannot offend but by constraint, and endeavour? If there be good fortune in this, yet there is no glory due to it. It is no more a matter of Praise to have a Vertue so natural than to be born with a fair Face or a robust Body. And, to speak rightly concerning this matter, it must be said, Those Vertues which are natural to us proceed very often from an ill Principle; the Patience that is natural comes from Flegm and Stupidity; the Boldness that is allied to the Temperament, comes from Ignorance or want of Wit. And especially since there is no liberty nor choice in the matter, there can be neither any glory or merit.

But

But if I grant there is some knowledge and choice attending the practice of those Vertues; yet certainly where there is so much easiness to do what is done, it must be reckon'd to deserve the less Praise. It was not so much a matter of wonder to see *Demades* become a good Orator as it was for *Demosthenes* to be so: I say *Demosthenes*, because Nature had seem'd to deny him both Tongue and Lungs; and yet he rendred himself so admirable in Eloquence, that his Example alone is sufficient to show that there is almost nothing impossible to Art, and that there is hardly any defect which we may not correct, as he did his, by labour and study. It is in this that we merit the greatest glory; when notwithstanding a natural repugnance and aversion that we have to do well in any case, yet we do not fail to acquire a habit of doing it. Certainly to raise a Vertue in a Temper that is contrary to it, is to do as those Kings, who, to show their Power, cause Palaces and places of Pleasure to be made in Desarts and upon Rocks. What a glory was it to *Heraclides* to become a Philosopher, when he had so very little Inclination to Wisdom? and for *Socrates* to become a good Man, who had so little Disposition to Vertue? What a glory is it to see a Person Chast while Nature makes the Blood boil high in the Veins? How glorious was it to see a Philosopher drag a trembling Body

to

to the Wars, and to see a Spirit bold while the sense is weak and fearful? In truth, I love better the Courage of *Caro* than that of *Ajax*. I like the Boldness that is founded in Reason, rather than that which proceeds from the Blood. I do not wonder at all that the Blind make nothing of Lightning, or that the Deaf are not terrified at Thunder. In the same Proportion that there is a want of the knowledge of an evil, there must be, without doubt, a want of the fear of it. That only amazes me, to see so many great Persons who have acquir'd the Habits of many Vertues, when they had not the least Disposition towards them.

There is then a much greater Glory in conquering the Repugnancy that we have to Good, than in only letting our selves be carried on with the Inclination that we have naturally to it. And upon this account it is, that Education is altogether requisite; since this polishes yet farther a good Nature, and corrects the faults of a bad one. It is for this Reason, that there is not a Person so unhappy in his Birth, who may not with some hopes aspire after Perfection; since we have the Examples of so many great Spirits, that have surmounted the Wickedness of their Temper, and conquer'd the natural Aversion that was in them to Good. For this Reason we ought to have a great Esteem of Education, since it will serve us as our Occasion requires,

quires, both for Food and Physick: It heals Distempers, and it maintains Health: It improves what is Good, and corrects that which is Evil.

LET US PROCEED to that which is of most Importance. That we may succeed well in this Matter we must begin betimes to render our selves capable of true Goodness, by the Means of a religious Education; since whatever the natural Repugnance may be, that we have to any Evil, there is still enough of Vertue to be acquired, and of Imperfection to be overcome, to give us a great deal of Labour. Observe here the Advice which seems to me of more than ordinary Usefulness. We cannot set our selves too soon to learn the Hatred of Vice, and the Love of Vertue. I cannot approve of the Opinion of *Hesiod*, who forbids to teach Children any thing before they are seven years of Age. And I like that of *Crysippus* much better, who maintained, That in the short Life of Man, there could be no Time well afforded to be lost. Can we begin too soon to heap up those good things in which we can never become rich enough? Can we study too early any Science, in which we can never be sufficiently perfect.

Men complain of the Length of Art, and the Shortness of Life. But if we would acknowledge our Errour herein, we should own, that this Unhappiness comes not from hence, that

that our Life is too soon at an end ; but from our Beginning in Vertue or Learning too late. We might render it much the longer for the Knowledge of good things, if we would begin to live and to study together. They that do not awake till Noon, have no right to complain that the Day is too short : They might have retarded the Evening by making a diligent Life of the Morning. Since we cannot set the Period further off, at least let us begin the sooner : Let us advance the Beginning, since we cannot keep back the End.

When is it then that they ought to take care about the Education of Children ? Certainly they cannot begin too early to teach them that which they ought to practice through their whole Lives. As *Lalrus* among the Heathens taught his Daughter from the Cradle the Laws of Eloquence, that she might know how to speak well : So *S. Jerom* taught *Pacatula* the Laws of Christianity from the very Breasts, that she might know how to live religiously. What is there we ought rather to know than Religion ? and wherein can we more worthily employ the first Fruits of our Reason, and the first Essays of Speech, than to acknowledge and adore him who has given us one and the other of these ?

Josephus says, that the *Israelites*, by the Commandment of *Moses*, knew the Law before they knew their own Names. It is thereabouts that we ought to begin our Christian Education.

Education. It ought not to be said, that at such an Age we are capable of so serious Knowledge. Certainly Childhood is capable of learning the Laws of Religion, if it be not of putting them in Practice: This Age is capable of the Functions of the Memory, if not of those of the Judgment. Therefore the Poets feign, that the most ancient of the Muses is *Mnemosyne*, that is to say, the Memory; to shew that this is the first Thing whereof we are capable. For, as there can be nothing expected from a Field that is never sown; so there can be nothing hoped for from all our Endeavours, if this Mother of Arts and Sciences lies barren. It ought therefore to be rendred fruitful betimes by an holy Education, to the end it may produce wholesome Effects, when we shall have the Use of Reason and Understanding. Children are capable to receive, if they are not to produce. They are capable of Impression, if not of Action.

The Knowledge of Good, forms it self in the Soul, just as the Seed shoots in the Earth: There is a time when they are hid; there is another when they flourish, and wherein they bear Fruit. Ah, how happy are those Women, that know Heaven before Earth; and learn Devotion before Vanity! This divine Foundation can never be ruin'd: What is imprinted at first in this clean Paper, can never be got out again. The holy Scent with
which

which the new Vessel is perfum'd, will abide in it a long time. For this Reason, 'tis highly important that they should have Impressions of Good made in them, before they be exposed to those of Evil. And if *Quintilian* wish'd, that even the Nurse should be Eloquent for the making an Oratour, and for the better Forming of the Speech of Children; there would be reason also to desire that she were devout for the better Forming of the Conscience, and to lay betimes the first Foundations of Vertue.

I do not intend herein, that we should begin all at once to make Children learn the highest Mysteries of our Religion: We must accommodate Instruction to their Minds, as we need to do Food to their Stomachs; and give them first Milk before we give them any solid Nourishment. I know well enough we cannot reasonably attempt to make the little Creature sensible of the Grandeur of the Eternal Glory, which would desire a Sugar-Plum more; or to teach the Worth of Obedience to her that lifts a little Hand to strike her Mother. I know well, that the Knowledge of Christianity has, as *Tertullian* speaks, certain Degrees, and even several Ages, wherein to grow and raise it self by little and little.

But after all, supposing that Children cannot comprehend that which is so elevated, must we therefore not teach them any thing but what is superfluous and idle? Why is it,

T

do

do we think, that they are always in Action, and play so many Tricks? Is not this as a silent Complaint of the Time which they are suffered to lose? Is not this a sign that they want better Employment; and that even already they might be busied about something else than in Play, and about Babies? I do not herein desire that any should fasten themselves upon my Opinion. I have not so great an esteem of my own Thoughts, as to be willing to impose them for a Rule to all others. But let us observe what *S. Jerom* says concerning the Education of the young *Pacatula*; and which may be of great use to those of her Sex.

“As soon (says he) as She shall have passed the Age of seven Years, let her learn the Psalter by heart, and let the holy Scripture be all the Treasure of her Soul: She ought to begin to be instructed (he adds) as soon as she begins to blush. As soon as they are capable of Shame, they are capable of Discipline. From the Time that they show the Marks of their Conscience upon the Countenance, it ought to be believed that Remorse has taken place of Innocence; since they already know to put a Difference between Good and Evil. See here the Opinion of that holy Man, which perhaps, may seem too severe to a great many. But let the World think of it what they will; the Corruption of Education which we commonly see is an unparallel’d Disorder: When we may see Young Persons

Persons allow'd all manner of Liberty; and that they are praised for that which they ought to be corrected for; and as if there were a Fear that they should not learn to sin soon enough; they are accustomed to see and to do Evil, to the end they may have the less Fear, when they shall be arrived to a riper Age.

THAT NONE MAY accuse me of too much Severity, I declare, that too great a Restraint is often very dangerous; and the *Danae*, whom the Poets tell of, was corrupted in that Tower where her Parents had shut her up, to keep her safe. This Solitude was more dangerous to her, than Company might have been. I own, that as Waters pent in, rush with the greater Violence when they get loose; so those humours that have been too hardly used, fly out with the greater License, when they can meet with a favourable Occasion. Lastly, I grant that there ought to be Moderation used in this Matter: That they ought not to have all things permitted, nor all forbidden them; that Prudence should shew us a certain Path between Licentiousness and Tyranny; and that we should manage wisely our Promises, and Threatnings; our Sweetness and Rigour.

BUT HOWEVER, in my Opinion, Restraint is more safe for this Age than Liberty: And if one has not a very good Understanding, the Chains of Fear hold us to

our Duty much better than the Cords of Love. Gentleness is good for those who have some Knowledge and a good Wit; but to those that want these, it is very dangerous. If they have a good Nature, Liberty may corrupt it: If a vicious one, they want nothing but Occasions or Opportunities to do ill. It seems to me convenient to treat young Persons as they do those that are sick: We must have regard to what is profitable to them, not to what would be most pleasing. There is too great Hazard in committing them to their own Conduct: Distrust in this Case is one of the fittest Parts of Prudence; which ought not only to regard the Evils impending, but also those that are possible, so as to make Provision against them. By keeping them at a Distance from Temptation and Opportunity; at least, we take from them the Effects, if we take not the Desires: If the Venom stays with them of a vicious Inclination, it is hinder'd from hurting. And that we may the better make it appear how far the Fear of Danger ought to extend, let us observe, that *S. Jerom* did forbid to the young *Pacatula*, not only the Company at Balls and Comedies, but also even the Assemblies of the Church, when there was Danger. These, in truth, are Holy Places; but there are in them sometimes Spectators and Occasions that are Profane.

BUT IF WE enquire further into the Original of Evil, we shall find that the greatest
Danger

Danger of Corruption for young Children, is very often Domestick. And if many Daughters have the Vices of their Mothers; this is by Imitation as well as by Resemblance in Disposition. A bad Example has no less Power and Influence in the Matter of Education, than the Blood has upon the Birth. I blush when I consider the Disorder of the Age. How is it possible, that this Child should not be addicted to Gaming, who has, perhaps, hardly ever seen his Father without the Dice or Cards in his Hand? And how can this Daughter be Chast, who knows her Mother daily sighing after her Gallants; who sees her, every Moment receiving Love-Letters; and never hears her speak but of Walks, and Assignations that are suspected? Besides this; How can we reprove them for a Vice, who have seen us committing the same? To speak the Truth; Whatever Menaces, whatever Lectures we give them, still the Example shall have more Power to carry them to Ill, than Corrections or Forbiddings can have to withhold them from it. As the Vine lifts it self upon the first support it can find; so Childhood conforms its self to the first Model that it sees: Not being yet able to act by reason it moves by Example. Childhood receives the bad Impressions easily, but they cannot be defaced again, but with a great deal of Difficulty. And if the Apostles seem'd to find it difficult to drive out a Devil from one that had been possess'd

from his Youth; we ought to believe this a Miracle very rare, The Conversion of a Person debauched from his Childhood. Whenever the Education is bad, Vice gets so deep rooting in our Souls, that it is in a manner impossible to get rid of it. And let it be judged what Hope there is of saving a Person, when a vicious Habit is added to a vicious Nature. To oblige Mothers to think the more seriously of this Matter, we have many Examples, as well sacred as profane, which might be produced; but I shall content my self, to shew them that of the *Eurydice* in *Plutarch*. This illustrious Lady being now well advanced in Years, made her self be taught the Arts and Languages, to the end that she might be able to teach them her self to her Children. She did not at all think it sufficient to give them Life by bringing them forth, if she did not also render them virtuous by their Education. How lovely is this Example! From hence we may learn that the Mothers who have no Merit nor Goodness, ought to acquire it, at least, on purpose for the Instruction of their Children. And if a Heathen had so much Care for the teaching of her Children to speak well, how much more should the Christian Ladies have for the instructing of theirs to live well?

*Of an Equal Mind under Good and
Bad Fortune.*

IT IS NOT a small difficulty to determine whether the Women are more capable of Moderation in a good Fortune, or of Patience in a bad one. Whether they are more subject to Despair under Affliction, or to Insolence when they are Prosperous; since, to speak the truth, both Grief and Pleasure sometimes do no less harm to our Spirits than Frosts or great Heats of the Sun do to Flowers; and as a Flame goes out by either too little or too much of the Matter that feeds them, so the Spirit is lost by too little or too much of Contentment. If our Fickleness be well examin'd, it will be found to proceed from these two sources. Fortune assaults us with Sword or Poison: It destroys us either with the Face of a *Siren*, or with that of a *Fury*: and for fear least we should avoid the mischiefs she intends, she will employ even that which is good to the doing of us harm.

Let us not dissemble our weakness; we waver both in one and the other Fortune. And as the Painters observe, the same wrinkles of the Face serve both for laughing and crying; so certainly experience shows that we laugh and weep very often

280: Of an Equal Mind.

like Children for the same cause. I will say somewhat more ; The same Persons who rejoice too much in what favours them, are also too sad under evil. The defect as well as excess causes inequality in them ; and as those Bodies which are very sensible of heat, are alike sensible of cold ; so those Spirits that suffer themselves to be too much overtaken with Grief, do also suffer themselves to be too much transported with Pleasure ; they are commonly the same Persons who are subject to Insolence and Impatience. There are few Persons who know how to regulate their Resentments, and who can show a strength of Spirit on great occasions of Joy or Grief. There are few that are like *Socrates* in this, who always show'd a Countenance and Mind equal in all sorts of Occurrences. We suffer our selves to be carried away with the Stream ; Occasions command us ; We are like those Birds that are swimming upon the Water during a Tempest, that are exalted or abased by the Wave that carries them.

LET NOT ANY imagine now that to describe an equal Mind I will make a stupid one. I desire the Lady to be Prudent not Unsenfible. I do not mean that she should quite rid her self of Passions, but that she should tame them. This would be no less unjust than impossible. But if this were a thing that could be done, were it not a very inhumane Philosophy that should renounce Compassion and Mercy, or Love and Hope?

Of an Equal Mind. 281

A great Person of the present time had reason to say, That to think of taking away the Passions entirely, were to propose the turning of a Man into a Rock, or a God, by putting him either too much above, or too much beneath resentment. The Opinion of *Epictetus* in this matter seems to me admirable. We ought not to be without Affection (says he) as the Brutes, nor without reason as Fools, but we ought to be so sensible as still to know how to oppose Reason to Grief; because when we live after that manner, we show that we can be Sick, and can cure our selves; that we have both a sense and wisdom. Or otherwise we should not have an equality of Mind, but a stupidity: and it were to show that we have either no resentment, or no reason to govern it.

And in truth, I cannot approve of a Mind constant after the Stoical manner. The Wise Person they would frame, resembles the *Ceaneus* in *Pindar*, who had a Skin so hard that it could resist Arrows and Darts, though he were perfectly naked.

Their Insensible Philosopher seems to be composed of *Adamant*; he is shut up close, but will not acknowledge himself a Prisoner; though he grows old, yet he does not think himself wearing out; he is Ugly, but very agreeable however; he is a King, but enjoys nothing but his Arguments; he possesses all things, but begs his Bread; his Fancy serves him for a Horn of Plenty, even in Poverty
it

2

282 Of an Equal Mind.

it self; and, to say truth, he is not happy, but only because he is unwise.

This Stoical Spirit will not suffer it self to be touched with Joy any more than with Sorrow. To be of an equal Mind according to the Mode of this Sect, one must not put ones self to any trouble if a Friend be Sick, or Unfortunate. We ought not any more to rejoice at a Good Fortune, than to make our selves sad at an Evil one: A state of good Health should no more render us content, than that of Sickness. We must even pass from one to the other of these without any resentment of the change.

See here the equal Mind of the Stoicks! But is not this a very extravagant Morality? Must it not be said, That those who maintain this Doctrine might more fitly call themselves Poets than Philosophers? And are not their Wise Men like the Mighty Knights in Romances, that stop Rivers, and encounter the Stars themselves, and carry away every where Prodigious Victories? It is not at all of this sort that I desire a well composed Mind to be; I do not seek for an imaginary force of Mind, and such as would destroy Humanity instead of regulating it. I desire only a Wisdom that is possible and reasonable. I declare, That there are times and occasions wherein one may very justly weep or laugh, and may be joyful or sad. Also I judge, that when *Euphrante* had lost an Excellent Wife, he had reason to complain of his Philosophy; for
that

Of an Equal Mind. 283

that it commands us (as he said) to love that which is good, and yet forbids us to be grieved when we have lost it.

Since we ought to express a joy when we have with us an Object that pleases us, may we not also testify some regret when we have it no longer? That which any possess with love, they cannot lose but with grief. It is no less natural to be sad for the presence of Evil, than to be joyful for the presence of good. Provided there be no excess in these things, it is but a mad Philosophy that would forbid us the having resentments so natural and reasonable. To be joyful in the Morning upon good Tidings, and sad in the Evening for bad News, this is not a Vicious inequality, this change is just : and as our Taste is diversly affected with that which is bitter or with that which is sweet, our Mind also must be moved with that which is good or evil. What danger is there in owning that our Soul is capable of joy and sadness, as well as our Senses are of Pain or Pleasure? In truth it may be said, That Reason is not contrary to Nature, and it is possible to show our selves wise and sensible both at once.

Let us make this Error yet a little more manifest. There are some that think it a great effect of Constancy to make no Complaints of any evil that they endure : but certainly there is sometimes no less danger than blindness in so doing : It is a Vanity that has cost many Ladies very dear, while they have increased their ill by being desirous to conceal

284 Of an Equal Mind.

ceal it, and because they would not shed a few Tears, they have been seen to Die suddenly upon the place. Since our Lord Jesus himself willingly testified his Grief by weeping, and surely none can accuse him of having an uneven or unconstant Mind; we may declare That Weeping and Complaint do not always testifie Impatience, but only they show that we are not utterly insensible. Let us declare, That if God himself was pleased to show that he was indeed Man too by sadness, and tears; we ought not to be ashamed to confess our selves such likewise by the same signs and appearances. However it be a sign of weakness to do thus, yet is this so universal in this World that there is no more blame due to a Man for being liable to Grief, than for being subject to Die? We are no more unsensible in this Life than we are Immortal.

After all, what advantage is it to be sullen in our Grievs? Were it not better to diminish our displeasure by weeping, than to be hardened into a Pillar of Salt, instead of letting this bitterness drop out by the Eyes, or of breathing it off with a few Complaints? A great Poet had reason to say, That the Tears as well as Waters have a right to a passage, and we ought to moderate only, not forbid the use of them. Grief is sometimes like a Stream, it swells if it be resisted; it slides away and is spent in the less time if we give it way. Provided we can overcome this Enemy, what matter is it whether we do this by

flying

Of an Equal Mind. 285

flying or fighting him? But certainly I fear I may be accused for want of Judgment, for my insisting upon this matter, inas much as it seems no way necessary to allow Women the liberty to complain of their Grievances, and the most part of them seem to understand the trade of that but too well. They mightily extol the Constancy and Strength of Mind that was in *Isabella*, Queen of *Spain*, because she did not so much as complain under Sickness, and the extreamest Pains. And nevertheless they find at times enough of their Sex who have a Vice quite contrary to her Vertue; such who do not only complain with Reason, but with Artifice too; and who would seldom be long ill, if Complaining were enough to cure them.

However that be, we may learn from what has been said, that to have an equal Mind it is not necessary that we always abstain both from laughing or weeping. It were a Philosophy too Stoical, that would not permit any but the same resentment to events, that are favourable or deadly. I judge that according to the occasions that present whether they be Good or Evil, a Wise Man may be joyful or griev'd; yea, I believe that he may complain when he has cause without being guilty of Cowardliness in so doing: and that he need not be too much a Philosopher as *Possidonius*, who would needs appear well when he was really Sick. Let us proceed further, and having seen wherein the equality of Mind
does

286 **Of an Equal Mind.**

does not consist, let us observe wherein it does; and having overthrown the Opinion of the Vulgar, let us examine that of the Wise in this Matter.

I grant then, that as there are many sorts of Winds upon the Sea that can toss the Ships, so there are also many sorts of Passions within us to trouble and shake our Minds: But it must be own'd that among all these Movements there are but two principally which cause the most remarkable changes in us; I mean, when the presence of Good gives us too much joy, or that of Evil too much Grief. There are some Passions that make the Blood fly out too much to the extremities of the Body, there are others that cause it to retire and throng too much about the Heart; and then that dilates or contracts it self too much. As it may be seen that fair Weather invites us to walk, and a Storm drives us into the House: In like manner, the Occasions of joy make us go too much out of our selves, those of sadness make us retire too much within our selves. The Excess of the one and the other hinders the due equality of the Mind. It remainsthen only at present that we show which of these two Passions gives us the greater trouble and disorder; and to see whether there be more danger of being too joyful in a Good Fortune, or of being too sad in a Bad one.

CERTAINLY there are more die of Grief than of Joy, and there are more Ship-
wracks

Of an Equal Mind. 287

wracks in Tempests than in Calms. Prosperity destroys less than Adversity. And it is not to be imagin'd that Good should do as much Evil as Evil it self. Though all the Passions are able to cause some inequality in us, yet there is none more capable to destroy us than Grief: This appears sufficiently even in the Colour of the Face in those that are afflicted, and in the disorder that it brings into the Thoughts of the Wisest Persons. I do not wonder at all that those Women who are possess'd with Grief are also pale and dejected, as if they had no Life remaining in them: since, to speak the truth, Grief is no other than a long Death, and Death is no more than a short sadness. And indeed Grief keeps us too long under Punishment. It would seem a very favourable blow that should put an end to our sufferings though together with our Lives. We never see any that kill themselves because they are too joyful, but there are many do that fatal Office for themselves because they think themselves too much afflicted; and who take Death for a Remedy to their Grief. How much mischief does this Passion do both to Body and Soul? It dispirits the Blood, it infects the whole Constitution, it gives Diseases to the Body and Inequality to the Mind: It weakens the Instruments first and then the Reason: It has sometimes need of Physick as well as Philosophy to heal it. I own that there are seasons sometimes wherein Afflictions quicken

us,

us, and open our Eyes; but if we examine them thoroughly, we shall find that they dull the Spirit more frequently than they awaken and excite it.

And, that we may not dissemble the truth, how many women may we see who in their Adversities become like the *Niobe* of the Poets: who lost all sense in her misery and was turn'd into a Marble Statue? How many are there that grow stupid, and Immovable as she was, who testifie neither Wit nor Courage, who abandon themselves to their Grief, and are to such a degree disabled, that they cannot make one Effort either towards the comforting or defending of themselves? It ought not therefore to be thought strange if sadness does so much destroy the Wit, since as this is ordinarily accompanied with despair, it makes no resistance, it stands with the Arms across, it gives up its self a prey to the Enemy. One may judge from hence how much more dangerous this is than Joy, for that Moderation depends more upon us than Patience. It is much more difficult (says *Aristotle*) to support ones self under Grief, than to abstain from pleasure. Temperance has its dependence on our Liberty, but Toleration depends upon the Malice of our Enemy. If Joy persuades, sadness constrains us: While the one solicits, the other carries us along. It is much more in our power to defend our selves from the Songs of a *Syren*, than from the Impetuous Violence of a Tempest.

It

Of an Equal Mind. 289

- It is for this reason that there were some Philosophers who were of Opinion, That Patience was the least Voluntary of all the other Vertues; since to bring that into the World, it must be that some commit Injuries and others endure them, and there must be Tyrants that there may be Martyrs. But whatever they think there must be much liberty and freedom of our own Wills in our Patience, since 'tis capable of a Reward; and if there be some Pains necessary for the putting on this Vertue, this is that which augments the worth of it: For all the World know well enough that 'tis more easie to resolve the taking our Pleasure, than the enduring of Evil. After this, ought it not to be own'd, that Sadness has more power to destroy us than Joy; and that we have more of difficulty to preserve our Minds, even while we are in Adversity, than during our Prosperity? Is it not true that we are less in danger under an evil when the remedy depends upon our selves, than when it depends upon others? And must it not be confess'd, That we are much more excusable when our Enemy kills us, than when we kill our selves?

And that we may show yet further that Sorrow is much less subject to our will than Joy; it must be said, That we have much less Inclination to this than to the other. The Tears which we shed when we are coming into the World, testify that we are rather born to weep than to laugh. We are born in Tears,

we live in trouble, and die in grief. Therefore *Themistius* spoke to the purpose, when he said, That if we naturally weep it ought not to be a wonder, forasmuch as that when *Prometheus* was holding the Clay in his Hands, of which he was to Form Man, he would not temper it with any other Water than that which came from his Tears.

The Fable herein conceals a Truth which Experience discovers to us every moment. But if this be true of both the Sexes, it is yet more particularly so concerning the Women; to whom Sadness seems to be rather more natural than to the Men: For as their Temper has much less Heat, so it is also much more capable of this Passion, in Proportion as it is more moist; Melancholy lodges there as in its proper Element; and upon every the least cause for weeping, they are able to shed Tears in abundance. As the Worms breed rather in that Matter which is tender, than in that which is more hard; so Sadness forms it self more easily in an Effeminate Complexion, than in one that is more Masculine and Strong; This natural softness or delicacy is the most sensible of Grief. In so much that if that Sex would defend themselves from sorrow, they have not only Fortune to Combate in the case, but even Nature it self. This is an Enemy that they have so much the more reason to fear for that it is Interiour and Domestick.

All this is but little yet towards the discovery of that Mischief which Sadness may do them.

Of an Equal Mind. 291

them. The Ladies ought to consider that this Passion is not only capable to craze the Constitution, to disfigure the Countenance, to trouble the Reason, but moreover also to debauch the Conscience. It is for this Reason that the Casuists forbid it as well as the Philosophers. And that they cannot say Adversity shows us Heaven, when Prosperity would hide it from us. Certainly if there are Rich Men that are Impious, there be also Poor that are Blasphemers: If there are those that are Ungrateful for good, there are others impatient under evil: If there are some Insolent in their Prosperity, there are others desperate in their Misery.

Let not any object to me that God makes himself be acknowledged better by an evil Fortune sent to us than by a good one: If any see this sometimes come to pass, they must ascribe it to our error and weakness. For what reason is there to think that God should be more visible to us in a Privation, than in that which is true and solid? And how can this be that he should engrave the Image of his Divinity in the Evil that he has not made, rather than in the Good which is his Work and Creature. Besides why cannot we as well bless the Hand that bestows Favours, as that which smites us? I grant that after it has pleased God to attempt the making us love him and it has prov'd in vain, He is as it were constrain'd to make us fear him. But must not the Cause of this be reckon'd only our own Ingratitude

and Ignorance? Would he ever make use of Severity, if we would suffer our selves to be attracted with the Charms of his Love?

Let us declare the Truth: We are no less liable to offend God under an excess of Evil, than in a great Prosperity; the Conscience is no less in danger in Affliction than in Felicity; the Miserable may conceive designs as dangerous as the Happy; and if some are refin'd like Gold in this Furnace of Affliction, there are many more that are like Chaff consum'd in it. Lastly, that we may speak with a great King to this case; We do not see that they who fall into the Bottomless Pit do praise God any more; they murmur even in Hell, but they adore and worship in Paradise. It is not the Mouth of the Dead, but that of the Living that praises and publishes his Grandeur and Power; see then the mischief that Sorrow does when 'tis excessive; see how it takes away Fervour from Piety, Vigour from Action, Health from the Body, Light from the Reason, and Repose from the Conscience.

NOW AFTER THAT we have seen how much the Spirit is in danger under an Evil Fortune, let us see how much more it is so under a good one. I desire to begin to do this on that side which is most important. A good Fortune makes us Proud, Misery renders us Humble. The one makes us go out of our selves, the other makes us retire and dwell at home. This conceals our weakness, the other makes us know it. *Alexander* learnt much better

Of an Equal Mind. 293

better that he was Mortal when he saw his own Blood flowing from him, than his Father *Philip* did from the Message of his Page, who had it in charge to tell him every Morning, *That he was but a Man*. The Son understood better our Humane Misery by his Wound, than the Father could do it by a Complement and Message. It is sometimes very hard for one to know her self rightly in a great Prosperity. Vanity and Flattery hinder us from seeing rightly what we are. It is for this reason we have elsewhere said, That a Good Fortune has no more true Friends than an Evil one ; because if all the World shuns this for fear of the Charge of Succour, no one will approach the other, but only to destroy it.

Prosperity is not only Blind, but also Insolent ; as it hinders us from seeing our Defects, it does not permit us to acknowledge with Equity the Merits of others. Whatever respects are paid to it, still it believes that it merits more than it receives. One would never be much concerned to oblige such Persons by any Service, since they will hardly believe that we have well discharg'd our selves. Without doubt there are many could not forbear to blush if they would represent to themselves, as they ought, how often it comes to pass that the one possesses what the other deserves ; and that Fortune is sometimes liberal there, where Nature is more sparing of her Gifts.

What a deal of Blindness is there in the
U 3 World !

World! How much do we see it in the Ugly and Stupid, who nevertheless let themselves be perswaded that they are Beautiful and very Knowing; and they can never be undeceiv'd, neither by the Glass nor any knowledge of themselves? See here the mischief that Prosperity breeds in the Mind: But this is not all, it not only obscures the Reason, but it also corrupts the Conscience, and effeminates the Courage. The Soldier of *Antigonus*, and he that serv'd *Lucullus*, were bold only while they were hurt; no sooner were they cured, but they would no more expose themselves so freely to Danger. The Voluptuous are without Courage as well as without Steadiness; *Venus* is as unconstant as the Element she came out of: She, to be sure, will not stay long there, where any thing is to be endur'd; no sooner had *Diomedes* wounded her, but she fled from the defence of the besieged *Troy*.

I declare then, That if there are some who destroy themselves when Fortune is contrary to them; there are yet a great many more that debauch themselves when she is favourable. They say Fortune has two Hands with which she fights us; but it must be confess'd, That if there falls one thousand by the left Hand of Affliction, there falls ten for it by the right Hand of Prosperity. Also experience daily shows us, That Prosperity needs much less time to conquer us than Adversity: This latter laid siege a long time to *Troy* without being able to take it; but the other in one Night made a Prey

Of an Equal Mind. 295

Prey of it. This City preserv'd its self under all the Calamities of a ten Years siege, and at last lost her self in one Night of Mirth and Debauch.

Pleasure corrupts all. Whatever there is of greatest strength in the World, it grows effeminate in the Bosom of this Wanton: She weakens the strongest, and blinds the wisest Persons. Even they sometimes who have for a long while resisted Grief, have let themselves be vanquish't in a moment by Pleasure. She does not care for but to deceive us; she does not lift us up but to precipitate us with the greater fall. And to say she does us no harm when she is kind and soothing, is as if one should say, That a Flatterer is not an Enemy, and that he who kills one with a perfum'd Poison is no Murderer. However it be, there are very few that can defend themselves from it; and for my part, I esteem much more those that use Moderation in their Pleasures, than those that practise Patience under Sufferings: It seems to me that there is more ease in rendring ones self Victorious over Grief than over Pleasure.

They who have read in S. Jerom the Constancy of a young Man, who was laid bound upon a Bed of Roses, and expos'd to the unchast Allurements of a Beantiful Curtezan, who endeavour'd to corrupt him: Would they not own to me that he endur'd more evil upon this Bed of Flowers, than if he had been thrown upon a heap of Thorns? and that he had suffer'd less under the Hands of an Execu-

tioner, than he did from the Filthy Embraces and profane Assaults of this Lewd Woman? This was a new kind of Martyrdom; others suffer'd under Torments, he suffer'd under Pleasures. He was more impatient at the suffering of Pleasure, than others in the enduring of Pain.

How powerful is this Example! This Christian Soldier was in part a Conquerour, and partly conquer'd. His Reason carried away the Victory which his Sense lost. But that we may well comprehend this matter, we need but to represent to our selves, how difficult it is to defend our selves from an Enemy that pleases. In the combating Pain or Adversity our Sense joins with the Spirit; but when we must make War with Pleasure, the Sense takes part against the Reason. The Man whole and entire resists Pain; there is but half of him that makes any resistance to Pleasure.

See how difficult it is to all to maintain an Equal Mind in all opportunities of Pleasure; and especially is it so to the Ladies: For it seems that Moderation in what pleases them is much harder to them, than Patience under Evil; the delicacy of their Constitution seems to render them an easie prize to Voluptuousness, and Joy seems to put them in more danger than Sorrow: They say that Sex have Moisture to maintain this withal, but not Heat enough for the other; that their Heart becomes depriv'd of Blood, upon every little Joy that makes it dilate its self. And in truth it

it has been seen that many Women have died with the excess of this Passion. *Polycrita* returning from the City of the *Naxians* was so overcome with Joy after having raised the Enemies siege from it, that she suddenly died amidst the publick Acclamations. This has sometimes happened to Men, but more frequently to Women; because they are more capable of resisting Affliction than Prosperity, they are more liable to Insolence than Despair, and their Spirit becomes more unequal in Joy than Sadness. And how can it be said that an excessive Joy does not diminish the equality of the Mind when it is able even to take away the Life? How can it be said to make no change, when we see it can kill?

HERE I MUST REPROVE the Levity of too many: If we consider their Inconstancy well, and the unevenness of their Humour, we may compare them to the Beast called the *Hyena*, of which it is said, That it is not of a certain Sex, but is sometimes Male and sometimes Female: These Persons are like the Lake of the *Troglodites* where the Water is said to change its taste every moment, being one while sweet and after bitter. There is nothing certain neither in their Actions nor in their Thoughts. They have their Feet always upon the Boul of Inconstancy as well as Fortune, who is of the same Sex with them, and are always ready to alter as she is, and to overturn that which they have set up. Of all the Vertues it seems as if there were none to which

298 Of an Equal Mind.

which they have less Inclination than to Perseverance. One may see them changing every moment, either their Affection or Opinion, there is no certainty in their Esteem or Love.

They cannot deny this : And if they would give themselves leisure sometimes to make Reflections upon their Unsteadiness, they would confess that when the Poets invented their Chimera, they had a design to draw their Picture ; since, to speak the truth, there is as prodigious a variety in their Sentiments as in the feigned Body of this Monster. In truth it is just matter of wonder, that the same Mind should be capable in so little time of so different Thoughts, even to contrariety sometimes. If many of these Women had a Painter hired to take every day a Draught of them according to their different Resolutions ; I assure my self, that there would appear every night under their Hands a meer Landskip of a Wilderness.

We may see some of them that will on this day appear mighty Chast, and on the next they are Lewd ; now they show themselves Covetous, and anon Liberal. It would be well for them that they could forget this shameful variety, and that they were without Memory as well as without Steadiness : For the little Memory they have, however little it is, will make them ashamed of their Judgment. I could wish to them, that which *Epictetus* requires in a Wise Man ; that is, That they knew the Art of Regulating their Opinions,
and

and of Subjecting them to Reason. They would herein have conquer'd many of their Enemies, and appeased those Winds which ordinarily cause all the Tempests of their Life.

But when is it that these Women are more subject to this Ridiculous inequality, than when they are elevated with a High Fortune; since from that time every one worships their Opinions, even the most Extravagant of them, and their Imperfections are praised, and their very Vices term'd Vertues; since also they have then all things, so much at their Wish, and are sometimes so weary even of Delight, that their own Disgust, which arises from their being cloy'd, causes their Inconstancy? Having tired themselves with true Pastimes, their fickle Minds busie them with Imaginary ones. It is for this Reason that Prosperity and Levity are very often lodged together.

Let none deceive themselves in this Matter, nor think that to render any Steady in their Minds I have a Mind to make them Obstinate: It is not always blameable to change, there are Seasons wherein this is not contrary to Prudence. It is as great a fault altogether, to adhere to an Opinion, when it is an ill one, as to change from that which is good. Obstinacy and Inconstancy both are equally contrary to Election; because the one is Immoveable when it ought to change, and the other changeable when it ought to be fixed. That we may be Steady or Constant, there is nothing more required than that we persevere in
Truth

300 Of an Equal Mind.

Truth and Equity. Besides, I know very well that the Minds of the wisest Persons may be moved at the first in some Re-encounters: *Aulus Gellius* says, That the Stoicks themselves do not deny but their Wise Man is capable of some change; because, say they, the Emotion is not in our Power, but the Consent to it is. And, to speak in the Terms of their Sect, the Visions do not depend upon us, but only the Approbations. I blame then the Unsteadiness which proceeds from our selves, and not at all that which is join'd to the weakness of our Sence, and is not in our own Power.

I HAVE a Mind to discover yet other Causes of the Unevenness of the Mind. I suppose then, that even knowing Persons may have sometimes their Mind uneven, and, as it were, irresolute; because the greatness of their Light does, as it were, dazle them, and make their Election waver; and while they look upon the same Object under various Appearances, they cannot easily determine themselves; but do find some probability, as it seems to them, even on all sides. Nevertheless it must be own'd that this Uncertainty is yet more common to the Ignorant, for that while they know not the true Nature of Good or Evil, there is more of Hazard than Assurance in their Choice; and by so much the more as their Spirit is weak, they are unconstant.

SEE AGAIN a Cause of this of another Kind: There are some who have truly some Wit
and

and Knowledge; but they have nevertheless also, I know not what natural Easiness of Temper, that renders them susceptible of all sorts of Opinions. Their Spirit has some Light, but it has nothing of Force; it knows how to propose, but has need of Assistance towards the making a good Conclusion. There are but too many of this Sort, who see the Truth, but are not able to follow it: Who set sail towards the right Port; but, every the least Tempest casts them upon another Coast; and who suffer themselves to be carried away with a Perswasion, as Ships are by the Winds, and Stream of the Tides. As they are Credulous, they are Unsteady.

AND IN TRUTH, may we not see some that have a certain Distrust of their own Sentiments, though they are not bad; and that cannot go without a Guide, though they are not blind? *Paschalius* says, that Women ordinarily believe very lightly when they are in great prosperity; and that it is from hence that they appear so uneven. He brings the Example of *Procris*, in *Ovid*, to show, that they very easily believe what they fear, or what they desire; since she her self was so credulous to the Reports of Slanderers, and yielded so readily to the Offers of *Cephalus* her Husband, when he was disguised, that she became as lightly Jealous as she was Amorous. And in truth, those that are in a great Fortune let themselves easily be catch'd with Flattery, or moved to Revenge. And as there is no injury so small, for which they

302 Of an Equal Mind.

they will not insist upon a Satisfaction; so there is no praise or Commendation of them so excessive as that they will not receive it. It is their constant Misfortune to give Credit to Flatterers and Slanders.

LASTLY, to find out the more ordinary, and dangerous Source of Unevenness, we may observe, that we shall find none more capable of this, than those Women who have no Design, or those that have bad ones. There are some careless Wretches, that do not propose to themselves any end at all; who live in I know not what sort of Indifference; like those Archers that let fly their Arrows into the Air without aiming at any Mark; or as Mariners that should let themselves wander upon the Ocean, without steering towards any Port. It cannot be, but such must be very unconstant. But those that have any ill Design, must needs be yet more so, because the frequent Remorses that gripe them, cause their minds almost every moment, to change their Opinion, as they do their Faces to change Colour.

So that, to have a steady constant mind, there is nothing more requisite than to keep it Innocent. And to this purpose, I have a most admirable Rule, which I took from a Person very knowing and religious. To preserve (said he) an Equality of Mind in all our Designs, and in all our Sentiments, without giving our Consciences any Reason ever to reproach us; we ought to take care in all our Pretensions, that Justice do seek, Prudence find, Strength revenge, and Temperance

Of an Equal Mind. 303

perance do possess. There ought to be Justice in the Affection, Prudence in the Understanding, Courage in the Effects, and Temperance in the Use. The Practice of this excellent Advice would confirm the most unconstant Thoughts, and happily determine those that are most true: For, that none may flatter themselves, it must be said, that the true Evenness of Mind is inseparably join'd to Purity of Conscience.


LET US FINISH this Discourse too with that which is of Importance, Whatever it is that happens to us, that is strange or deadly, what need is there that it should mightily trouble us? Certainly there would be many more that would endure well, and constantly, the Evils that befall them, if they could represent to themselves, that 'tis God who tries us; and that Patience is a Vertue so lovely, that, in the Exercise of this, Men are apt to think well of ones Actions, though they are none of the best. There are many more would defend themselves from Sadness, if they would but consider, that this Passion is no less unprofitable than dangerous. If, I say, they would consider, that in the greatest Extremities, either there is a Remedy, or there is none: If there be one, why should we not employ all possible means, without admitting so great a Trouble of Mind, till we see how they shall succeed: If there be no Remedy, we must resolve to suffer, as we must to die; since as the one is inevitable according to the Laws of Nature; so we see the other to be so according to the Laws of Necessity. After all,
How

304 Of an Equal Mind.

How superfluous is Sorrow and Grief! It cannot find again, that which is lost; nor call to life, what is dead; it cannot hinder, but that Evils will come, nor can it cause the good things that are gone away, to return. And nevertheless, as if this fatal Passion could not do us harm enough alone, we help it to persecute us: There are some that do not put forth the least Endeavour towards the helping of themselves; who seek Solitude, for fear they should be diverted from their Grief; and who fly from Comforters as if they were Murderers. What a Blindness is it to do ones self so much Mischief without any appearances of Advantage! If we examine this Case well, we shall find that we are not so unhappy in any thing else, for the most part, as we are in our Grief and Trouble of Mind: Or that we are not so truly sad, because we are unhappy, as we are unhappy in that we are sorrowful and sad.

F I N I S.

ADVERTISEMENT.

 *The ARTS of EMPIRE, and Mysteries of State Dis-cabineted, in Political and Polemical Aphorisms, grounded on Authority and Experience; and Illustrated with the Choicest Examples, and Historical Observations: By the Ever Renowned Knight Sir Walter Raleigh. Published by John Milton, Esq, Printed for Joseph Wats, at the Angel in S. Paul's Church-Yard.*

Leys ref in may

How superfluous is sorrow &
grief if it cannot find again
that which was lost

IR

1520 Sep 29 - 1 -

mark 5 -

~~mark 5 -~~

July 12.. 1521 1 -

1525
CNO.

English